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OUR
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ALEXANDER BALFOUR.

123







Yours most sincerely friend,
A. Balfour

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ALEXANDER BA[illegible]

A Memoir

R. H. L[illegible]

"I thought of [illegible]
afford me more [illegible]
of the reading o[illegible]

Second Edition

LONDON:
JAMES NISBET & CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.
LIVERPOOL: PHILIP JOHN NEPHEW.
1878.





ALEXANDER BALFOUR.

A Memoir

BY

R. H. LUNDIE, M.A.
LIVERPOOL.

"Thoughts of the marvellous progress of God's work in Liverpool afford me more comfort and rejoicing, than the perusal of any poem, or the reading of any novel."

A. BALFOUR.

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LONDON:
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1889.

PREFACE.

IN the following pages the aim has been to give, not an extended biography, but a sketch of Alexander Balfour. He was not an autobiographic man, either in his conversation or his letters. The latter, even when dealing with philanthropic or Christian effort, were generally brief and business-like, touching some practical matter of detail which required attention at the moment. From these, with some exceptions at the commencement and at the close of his life, little help can be got for the biographer. Had it been otherwise, we should gladly have let him speak for himself. But those who knew him, know that to speak for himself was the last thing in the thought or practice of Alexander Balfour. We are constrained, therefore, to give some record of the deeds that speak for him, and to glean some of the impressions and recollections which remain in the minds of those who were associated with him.

In doing this we have aimed at brevity, always welcome in a busy age.

Throughout, we have been painfully reminded of the words of Lord Bacon, "The best part of beauty is that which the painter cannot express." Narrative is incapable of conveying any adequate idea of the enthusiasm, the affection, the humility, the gentleness, the magnetic influence that glowed in wonderful combination in his countenance, and in his whole person while prosecuting some loved cause. When we can in words describe the fragrance of the mountain thyme, we may with ink and pen depict the finer and the subtler charm which threw its fascination over his friends. When such a man passes away from us, much passes with him which may in part be recalled by those who knew him, but which can never be conveyed to those who knew him not. Facts, incidents, narrative, and even impressions limited and hedged in by words, seem cold. Yet these, alas! are all we have to give.

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CHAPTER I.

PARENTAGE AND BOYHOOD.

"I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."—1 SAM. i. 28.

"My heart
Is little, and a little rain will fill
The lily's cup, which hardly moists the field."
—EDWIN ARNOLD.

CHAPTER I.

PARENTAGE AND BOYHOOD.

ALEXANDER BALFOUR was born at Leven-Bank, Leven, Fifeshire, on the 2nd of September 1824. He was the eldest of three sons, of whom only one survives. His father was Henry Balfour and his mother Agnes Bisset. Henry Balfour was the owner of a foundry in Leven, which is still carried on. Leven-Bank is a pleasantly situated residence near the foundry, and not distant from the shore of Largo Bay.

A venerable relation in her eighty-ninth year, who has spent her long life in the quaint Fifeshire town of Leven, is the repository of many family traditions, some of which may fitly find a place in these pages.

A few years before his death, Alexander Balfour gathered together some statistics about the ancestry of his family. These he recorded on the fly-leaf of his own Bible, and of another which he presented to one of his kindred. On two of the worthies in

his ancestral roll, he used to dwell with peculiar pleasure.

James Wilson of Caskardy, a relation of the house, went to America and took part with George Washington and Franklin in laying the foundations of the American Republic. His portrait is in the great picture in the Capitol of Washington, as one of the worthies who signed the Deed of American Independence on the 4th of July 1776.

When in the United States, a few years ago, Mr. Balfour was presented by an American citizen with a copy—said to be one of the hundred original copies —of the Declaration of Independence. On his return he had it hung up in the office of his firm, and he pointed out to his friends, with enthusiasm, the signature of his kinsman, James Wilson. He believed the original Declaration to have been written by the hand of James Wilson; and certainly there is a marked similarity between his signature and the body of the document.

One of the most cherished incidents in the family record is the following:—When John Balfour of Brokley, in the olden time, lay on his death-bed, his cousin, James Balfour of Dron, came to see him. "Shall I offer prayer with you?" he inquired. "Not prayer but praise," was the answer of the dying man.



On this James began to sing from the time-honoured version of the 145th Psalm as sung in Scotland:—

"O Lord, Thou art my God and King;
Thee will I magnify and praise;
I will Thee bless and gladly sing
Unto Thy holy name always.
Each day I rise I will Thee bless,
And praise Thy name time without end.
Much to be praised and great God is;
His greatness none can comprehend.
Good unto all men is the Lord,
O'er all His works His mercy is.
Thy works all praise to Thee afford;
Thy saints, O Lord, Thy name shall bless."

Before James Balfour had finished singing, his cousin had passed into glory. These were bright thoughts to fill the heart of a dying saint. When Alexander's own summons came, it was much in the bright trustful spirit of his venerable ancestor that he passed away. One of his cousins tells us that he read to her the ancestral roll, containing the brief record given above, and then exclaimed, "I should rather have the blood of men like these flowing in my veins than the blood of kings."

What subtle influence may have descended upon him from his remote ancestors, who shall say? There cannot, however, be any doubt that some of his marked characteristics came to him from his parents. His father was a man of great hospitality and readiness to give. His mother's heart was full

of generous impulse, and her life abounded in deeds of kindness regulated by discrimination. She feared to injure when her aim was to bless. The same quality was conspicuous in the overflowing beneficence of her son. Those who knew him best know how eager he was to help such as helped themselves, and how resolute he could be in withholding assistance from those who were likely to squander or make a bad use of it. Of course, like others, he was sometimes deceived and disappointed in those he sought to aid.

A contemporary and playmate recalls a characteristic incident of his childish years. The two children were walking together along the road, having each got a penny to spend on sweetmeats. Meeting a poor old man, Alexander slipped the penny into his hand. To the inquiry why he had done this, the boy gravely replied, "Don't you remember, 'He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth to the Lord.'" Already this great principle, which exercised so powerful an influence over his life, was beginning to take root in his young heart. He did not on this occasion quote the remainder of the text, but his after experience proved it true, "and that which he hath given will He pay him again."

It is still remembered by the same companion that

when Alexander and he were sent with some delicacies to a patriarchal old Christian, he, looking at the boy's loving face, said, "That is a child of grace from the womb."

He was very tender-hearted, and from early childhood his emotions were easily excited by hearing of any act of self-sacrificing devotion. When a very small boy, his mother was one evening entertaining company at dinner; and his nurse being required to help in waiting at table, Alexander was allowed to remain in the dining-room on a high chair in a recess, with a little table before him, on which was placed the family-Bible, which he had chosen to amuse himself with. No attention had been paid to him, and he had kept quiet for some time, when the party was startled by a sudden outburst of sobs from his corner. On inquiry being made, when he was able to explain, it was found that he had been reading the history of Abraham, and when he came to the story of his taking his son Isaac to the mount to offer him as a sacrifice, his feelings could not be restrained. In after life he was always much affected in reading this instance of Abraham's obedience and confidence in God.

The only years spent by Alexander under his father's roof were those of his childhood, and, like

other children of his age on the coast of Fifeshire, he enjoyed a large measure of unrestricted liberty. This "wholesome neglect," while it fostered the resourceful and independent spirit which has distinguished many sons of the "Kingdom of Fife," in a larger world, was not without its dangers. On one occasion, when only six years of age, Alexander was amusing himself, along with a companion of equal years and experience, in a small boat moored to the shore. The boat in some way got loose, and the boys had drifted a mile or two out to sea before the position of matters attracted attention. The drifting boat was speedily captured, and the child-mariners were rescued from perils of which they were scarcely conscious.

In his early boyhood Alexander attended the parish school of Leven, which was at that time under the care of the Rev. Thomas Cutler, a "licentiate" of the Church of Scotland. While a good teacher, Mr. Cutler fully shared his pupils' love of recreation, which had its part in developing manliness of character as well as soundness of health. The prospect of a "foursome" of golf on the breezy links of Leven, which form the fringe of Largo Bay, had irresistible attractions for Mr. Cutler. The quaint old schoolhouse still stands, though no longer devoted to

its original purpose. In front of it lies a strip of sand and bent-grass, a portion of the Links, while beyond stretches the noble estuary of the Forth, with the bold Bass Rock of historic memory, and the picturesque "Law" of North Berwick, on the opposite shore. From the three windows of the school-house all this was visible to teacher and scholars. The memory still lingers with some of the old pupils, of certain occasions on which, when a passenger boat from Edinburgh came in view before the hour of closing, and showed symptoms of golf-clubs and golfers, the claims of arithmetic and "the rudiments" were overpowered, and the eager teacher would say, "Well, boys, you may shut your books, there will be no more schooling to-day." The word of command did not need to be spoken twice, and perhaps the bracing breezes and the free exercise of the links gave no indifferent compensation for what was lost by the curtailment of lessons. At least so it was in the estimation of the scholars.

Alexander delighted in open-air exercise of all kinds. He was devotedly fond of his little shaggy Highland pony, and much of his spare time was spent in roaming about the country on its back. His love for riding continued with him throughout his life. And in all this we see one ground of his earnest

efforts, in later years, to furnish our city youths with such healthful exercise as lay within their reach.

It is not without interest to recall that young Alexander paid many a visit to Kilmany, the parish, somewhat before that time, of Dr. Chalmers. He had an uncle there, who was an elder in Kilmany church.

While still a boy he was sent to Dundee, where he enjoyed the advantage of a superior school. In Dundee he had the benefit of living with his grandfather, whose name-son he was, and whom he greatly resembled both physically and mentally. The "old Provost," as he is still familiarly called in the town, was a notable man at that period. He was a prosperous merchant with large business connections, and was very fond of his grandson. The following brief inscription on a stone in the "Howff" churchyard, in the centre of the town, marks the old man's resting place: "Alexander Balfour of Airlie Lodge, born at Kilmany, Fifeshire, 30th November 1765, died at Dundee 8th November 1855, aged 89 years."

Under his roof, in the pleasant mansion bearing the name of Airlie Lodge, which stood at a very short distance from the estuary of the Tay, and which was a Dower House of the Airlie family, Alexander found his home for some years. Airlie Lodge is now replaced by modern houses, and few of those who

were dwellers in Dundee at the time of which we speak, survive to tell what they knew of the old Provost's grandson.

Those who remain speak of the boy in the warmest terms. One of them referring to his ardent temperament says, "Balfour's youthful character—a character somewhat impetuous—foreshadowed the noble life he lived when he had come under the inspiration of a great love to God and man." He was naturally eager and hasty, but this temper was not overcome so much as regulated and utilised, so that when prosecuting any good work, an impulse and energy were thrown into it which are given to few men. He was characterised in early life by great strength of will. This, too, was not conquered but controlled. Without this quality, it would have been wholly impossible for him to have accomplished the work which in later life he carried out. Not unfrequently, in training what are called self-willed children, the mistake is made of endeavouring to "break their will." The truth is, that no life can be powerful and efficient among men without the presence of strong will. Happily in the educational and practical training of his early years, Alexander's will was not broken, but early yoked to noble purpose, and thus made available for great achievements.

While quick in temper as a youth, he seemed incapable of cherishing animosity against any one. His lovable, generous character made many friends and no enemies.

A faithful servant of old Provost Balfour still survives. It is touching to hear her speak of Alexander. He seems to be the brightest figure in the memories of a long life; and she wearies not in speaking of the golden-haired boy of Airlie Lodge. He was a "most lovable boy," says Elizabeth; "I would have done anything for him." Her testimony agrees with that of others who remember his childhood, when she says, "I never heard Master Alec say a word that he might not have said before all the ministers of Dundee." Elizabeth's brother had gone to Cincinnati, where he became a prosperous man. In after years she was invited to go out to join him. The advice received from friends was conflicting, and she felt greatly at a loss. In the circumstances she said, "I will just write to Mr. Alec, and whatever he advises me I will do." His advice was that she should go to her brother. He invited her to go to see him at Mount Alyn, at that time his home, on her way to America. She did so, and she reports: "He loaded me with kindness, and said, 'Now, Elizabeth, if you find it does not suit you to stay in the States

just come back and live beside me at Mount Alyn, and I will see that you have all you need.'" She did return to this country after a time, but her brother had made all needful provision for her, and she dwells among her own people in Dundee.

Airlie Lodge was on the whole a happy home for Alexander. The old Provost was greatly attached to him. It is curious to hear from contemporaries that Alexander's way of unconsciously but most effectively using his delicate tapering fingers, in any demonstration or argument in which he was engaged, was almost exactly his grandfather's method. The old Provost's wife was not Alexander's own grandmother. She was in fact the third wife. She seems to have been a lady of quick temper, and to have kept the youthful inmate of her house under the bonds of a somewhat sharp discipline. It was altogether characteristic of his heart, that when some years afterwards he began to draw a salary for himself, one of his first presents was a handsome silk dress which he sent home to the old Provost's wife. It seemed to be his way of showing that he remembered her kindnesses to him and was forgetful of all else.

Alexander, while living in Airlie Lodge, attended the Academy of Dundee for some time. From Dundee he passed to St. Andrews, where he attended

"Madras College," and then took one or two sessions at the University. After this he entered his grandfather's office in Dundee, and served his business apprenticeship there.

The religious life of Dundee, a little before the time of which we speak, had been feeble. Largely through the influence of Dr. Chalmers, the Rev. John Roxburgh (afterwards Dr. Roxburgh) was placed in the Cross Church, Dundee. His advent gave a great impulse to the spiritual life of the place. And some time after, the saintly Robert Murray M'Cheyne was added to the labourers in that field. Alexander with his grandfather was under Mr. Roxburgh's ministry, but at the same time he attended Mr. M'Cheyne's Bible-class. These circumstances, under the arrangement of Divine Providence, were much in favour of the highest interests of the youth. A surviving relative informs us that she distinctly remembers being told by him, that on one occasion Robert M'Cheyne put his hand upon his shoulder and said, "Alexander, how is it with your soul?" The gentle look, the loving voice, and the all-important inquiry produced a deep impression on his sensitive nature, and left an influence which never passed away.

In a pocket memorandum book, bearing date 1868,

we find copied the following words, which had probably been brought under his eye when searching among old papers:—"On an exercise of mine on John x., verse 9, Mr. M'Cheyne wrote: 'Very good; now you should seriously inquire whether you have entered at this door or not; or whether you are still a lost sheep like that one in Luke xv. Are you in the fold? Are you saved? Does Jesus give you pasture? Can you sing the 23rd Psalm *in your heart?*—Signed, R. M. M'C.'"

Thus do we find a link in early life, between one of Scotland's most saintly and winning ministers, and one of England's most large-hearted and generous merchants.

We must not close this chapter without recording a family tradition of a dark and dismal character, which is deeply stamped on the memory of the venerable Leven relative above referred to. The incident takes us back to the days of persecution, when the murky moor and the heather-clad mountain were dyed with the blood of Scotland's noblest sons. For eighteen long years, largely at the instigation of Archbishop Sharp, suffering and death for conscience' sake were endured. But "they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." The day of vengeance came. Driven to despair, and

determined to stop the career of the arch-persecutor, some of the people forgot their own principles, shut their ears to the pleadings of the gentle Hackston of Rathillet, and slew the guilty Sharp on Magus Moor, three miles from St. Andrews, on the 3rd of May 1679. Janet Farmer, a direct ancestress of the Balfours, occupied the farm of Magus. She saw two of the murderers approach her horse-pond and wash the blood from their weapons. Weird and terrible was the sight. No eye beheld but hers. A large reward was offered for information that might lead to the detection of the assassins. But Janet, though doubtless condemning the deed with the general body of the Covenanters, kept her counsel, and would make no sign. She thought that too much blood had flowed already.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY LIVERPOOL LIFE.

"I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies, as much as in all riches."—Ps. cxix. 14.

"Live while you live, the epicure would say,
And seize the pleasures of the present day.
Live while you live, the sacred preacher cries,
And give to God each moment as it flies:
Lord, in my views let both united be,
I live in pleasure when I live to Thee."

—DODDRIDGE.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY LIVERPOOL LIFE.

IN August 1844, in consequence of the lamentable state of commerce in Dundee at the time, and of the business affairs of his much respected grandfather "the Provost," Alexander Balfour removed to Liverpool, to push his fortune there. His path at first was by no means a path of roses, as appears from a number of letters written at that period, which he had never found in his heart to destroy. One of his most intimate friends in Dundee writes to him under date 3rd August 1844: "I know it is very hard to keep one's spirit up in a situation like yours. I scarcely like to speak of equanimity, lest it should seem as if I did not feel for you so deeply as I do. But still I hope you will be able to meet disappointment, if it be before you, manfully, *like yourself.*"

He succeeded, however, in obtaining a situation as clerk, in the office of Mr. Manuel Blandin, a Spanish merchant in the Mexican trade. Under date 30th

October 1844, he writes thus: "Getting a good berth here has been an exceedingly difficult matter. I do not know that I should undergo the same ordeal to obtain it again. The anxiety and trouble I had no idea of till I tried. I was struck with the coldness some folks I had letters to, showed, when they knew my errand: 'Would be glad to do anything that lay in their power, *but*, &c. &c.' Such was the usual reception; not, however, in the case of Mr. I."

It can hardly be doubted that the delay, disappointment, and rebuff through which he passed at this time was a valuable discipline, and helped to produce the peculiar interest which he felt through life in young men coming as strangers to our large towns. He was kind and considerate to such youths to an extraordinary degree. His own sufferings turned to the solace of many.

So much did Alexander Balfour commend himself to Mr. Blandin that the latter offered him a partnership before he quitted his office. But he preferred to enter the employ of Messrs. Graham, Kelly, and Co., where his services were highly appreciated, and where it was put in his power to go abroad, charged with responsible duties. Circumstances, however, did not permit him to avail himself of this offer.

One of the closest companions of Mr. Balfour's

Liverpool life from its commencement to its close says that as a youth he was the brightest of the bright; happy, and always trying to make others happy. In his lodgings he was full of generous hospitality. Friends of his youth who survive, still speak of his joyous companionship, in long walks after office-hours on bright summer evenings, to Childwall Abbey and other favourite resorts. He was then in the vigour of his early manhood—a manhood full of enthusiasm for whatsoever things are true, pure, and lovely, and which could not but communicate its influence to his friends and associates. His delight was to have young men about him. His voice was fine and his musical taste delicate: and sometimes at this period he would enliven an evening with a cheerful song.

Two events occurred in his early manhood which much affected him, the illness and death of his father, of which we shall by-and-by speak, and the death of his beloved brother Robert. He grew more serious and thoughtful. "What is life?" he would ask, and "Why are we here?" A visible change came over him. The great issues of our present condition seemed now to weigh upon him. The alteration in his habits grew naturally out of the deep, if almost insensible, change which had taken place within him. There was

from that time a marked ripening of character, which was carried further, when troubles and perplexities overtook him some years later. But already he was a different man. His life had taken a new and final direction. He spoke little of his feelings, but his religious convictions were visible in all he did.

The friend by whom these reminiscences are furnished was never separated from him, at that time, for a single day. And he is able to testify that he never heard from Mr. Balfour's lips, even in his merriest days, a story that was not absolutely pure and unobjectionable; nor would Mr. Balfour ever join in merriment caused by any utterance unbecoming a Christian and a gentleman.

Mr. Stephen Williamson, afterwards his partner in business, writes: "The first time I saw Alexander Balfour was in Fifeshire, at Leven, his native place. I was passing through, and went to Durie Foundry to see my school-fellow, his beloved brother Robert. Alexander was our senior by several years. He had been on the links golfing and had broken his club. His visit to the foundry was to see his brother, then in the moulding shop, and to get him to mend the broken club. I remember most vividly his sunny, joyous manner; but what struck me most of all was the tender affectionate bearing of the elder brother

towards the younger. I had often seen a different course of action on the part of elder brothers: and Alexander's conduct at this first interview left an indelible impression on my mind. At that early age there had begun to flow through his whole being the deep current of tender human sympathy which never ceased during all his life, but which broadened and deepened to the very end.

"I did not meet him again for several years. His brother, my old school-fellow, was learning his profession of engineering in Liverpool. Alexander was in an office in the same town, and the two brothers lived together for a time in lodgings in Wilton Street. I had just come from Scotland to an office in Liverpool. My first visit was to my old school-fellow at his lodgings, when I again met his brother Alexander. From that hour, during my stay in Liverpool before going abroad, he was my dearest and best friend, the one whose society was most congenial to me, and gave me the greatest happiness. To my great satisfaction we seemed to be mutually drawn together, and not many months elapsed before we arrived at an agreement or understanding, that if ever we were permitted to begin business, we should do so as partners. To that understanding we remained faithful; and I cherish with gratitude the recollection of the

fact that, on more than one occasion, my dear friend set aside tempting offers, and remained faithful to our unwritten and even dimly conceived pledges to each other. The time arrived when in God's good providence we were permitted to embark in business together, in Liverpool. It was in February 1851, the late Mr. David Duncan, afterwards M.P. for a Liverpool constituency, being associated with us from that time till 1863."

A document is still preserved bearing date, Sabbath, 20th October 1850, and signed A. B., which reveals to us some of the deep springs of his unselfish and elevated life. If we sometimes wonder at the unworldly ways and the marvellous self-abnegation of the man, we find the root of these things here. A fine natural character was purified, deepened, sweetened by heavenly influences. Self-sacrifice and devotion to the good of others, fed from such a source, became natural, and, as it were, indispensable to him. In all the relations of life, his desire was to obey his God and bless his generation; labour, cost, difficulty counted for little with him if these ends could be attained.

The document to which we refer is a solemn covenant which the distinguished Thomas Boston of Etterick made with God "on the 2nd day of December

1729." This was copied out and apparently adopted as his own by Alexander Balfour. A portion of it is subjoined. The italics are Mr. Balfour's.

"In obedience to Thy command and call, I, in myself a poor sinner, do now again *take hold* of that Covenant of life and salvation to *me*, believing in the name of Christ crucified, who is offered to me as the Great High Priest, who by the sacrifice of Himself, hath made atonement, paid the ransom, and brought in everlasting righteousness for sinners.

"I *credit* His word of grace to me, and trust in Him, that He with His righteousness will be mine, and that in and through Him, God will be my God, and I shall be one of His people, to be made holy and happy for ever.

"My God, I do by Thy grace acquiesce in that Covenant, as all my salvation, and all my desire, with my whole heart and soul. The Son incarnate is my only Priest, my Surety, my Intercessor, and my Redeemer; and in Him, His Father is my Father, the Holy Ghost is my sanctifier, God is my God.

"I resign myself soul and body to Him, renouncing all confidence in my own righteousness, doings, and sufferings. With my whole heart and soul, I take Him to be my very Head, and I am His only, wholly, and for ever, to live by Him, to Him, and for

Him. . . . I am with my whole heart content, (Lord, Thou knowest), to part with and to renounce every known sin, lust, or idol, particularly that sin which most easily besets me, together with my own foolish will, and all other lords besides Him, *without reservation*, and *without exception*, at His cross.

. . . . . .

"Let it be recorded in Heaven, O God, that I, though most unworthy, have this day taken hold of and come into Thy Covenant of Grace, offered to me, in Thy gospel, for time and eternity, that Thou art my God, and I am one of Thy people, from henceforth and for ever."

Thus did Mr. Balfour, with the faith of a little child, accept the offer of the gospel, and cling to the Person of the Redeemer. In every duty he looked up to His loving eye for guidance, and leant on His strong arm for help. In the way of obedience he scarcely knew what difficulty was; he went right onward, and often did the mountain before him become a plain. He found the paths of wisdom, paths of peace, and in them he seems to have been harassed with no doubts.

On getting such glimpses into the inner life of Mr. Balfour, one can understand how it was that, on one occasion, when a busy merchant whom he frequently encountered parted with him in the street, he said of

Mr. Balfour to a friend he met, "that man makes me tremble with his religious earnestness."

In 1854 Mr. Balfour's father was seized with alarming sickness. During his illness and convalescence, Alexander showed the greatest solicitude on his behalf. A letter to his father which he penned at this time is remarkable as addressed by a son to a parent. It bears date, Grange Lane, Birkenhead, 2nd June 1854. After expressing his joy at the improvement in his father's health, he says: "I trust, my dear father, you have now been enabled by the help of God's own good Spirit, renouncing every other confidence or hope, to lay hold on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour. I sincerely trust that no unbelieving doubts or hesitations keep you from cordially and truly obeying His injunction, 'Come unto *Me*, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' I am sure that every possible encouragement that could be conceived of is employed to gain the confidence of those who are seeking salvation." After dwelling at some length on Rev. i. 5, 6, he concludes: "How we are struck dumb at the riches of His grace; not only that He should love us, but should wash us from our sins in His own blood, and should make us kings and priests unto God and His Father! Then let us sing, 'To Him be glory and dominion for ever

and ever, Amen.' Let us seek that His most precious blood be indeed sprinkled on our souls—that we may be washed, may be clean, may be new creatures, and may have praise in our hearts to Him for ever and ever."

When he went to Liverpool, Alexander Balfour was furnished with a letter of introduction from his mother to Mr. William Kay Coubrough. Mr. Coubrough thus became his first friend in his new place of abode, and Alexander was much with him, spending his Sunday afternoons regularly in the congenial atmosphere of his family. Alexander never could forget kindnesses, and he retained the warmest regard for Mr. Coubrough, amid striking vicissitudes of prosperity and adversity, to the close of his own life. His aged friend, Mr. Coubrough, was among the truest mourners over his removal. His friendship helped to open the way to many other friends.

Among these was Mr. Robert Gibson, a youth like himself, in lodgings in Liverpool. A warm and life-long friendship grew up between them, of which a few particulars may here be given. In May 1847 they both crossed the Mersey to lodge in Birkenhead. Their opportunities for congenial intercourse were increased by the circumstance that they both belonged to Canning Street Presbyterian Church, Liverpool,

then under the care of the Rev. Joseph R. Welsh, and for a considerable time continued to attend his ministry. They used to meet regularly in the Woodside boat on their way to church, and had pleasant converse as they walked up together to the house of God. On one occasion the two young friends visited the Sabbath school of the Rev. James Towers, Grange Lane, Birkenhead, when they were enlisted as teachers, and became greatly interested in the work.

Some years later, the materials for the great Montreal Bridge were being prepared at the Canada Engineering Works, Birkenhead, and a large number of artisans, of whom a considerable proportion were from Scotland, took up their abode in the "Dock Cottages," near the workshops. The district referred to is at some distance from town, and Mr. Balfour thought it would be of advantage to plant a Sabbath school in the heart of the Dock Cottages. This was done by the two young friends in 1855. A goodly number of children were gathered, and the assistance of several intelligent engineers was secured for the work of teaching. Two or three young gentlemen were also drawn in to give their help. Mr. Balfour and Mr. Gibson for the first year or two, before their engagements were too numerous to admit of such occupation, used to go on week days to visit the

parents of the scholars. They also secured for the Dock Cottages, lectures on useful and popular subjects; they gave the children treats in winter, and took them on pleasure excursions in summer. Mr. Balfour, it need not be said, prosecuted this work with all his natural enthusiasm; and while the effort benefited many, it was unquestionably of great value to himself, helping to educate him for the Christian work which lay before him in after life.

In 1860 business arrangements required Mr. Balfour to go abroad, and thus, among other things, to sever his connection with his loved labours in the Dock Cottages, to whose inhabitants he had greatly endeared himself. On the 8th of May 1860 he wrote to his friend Mr. Gibson from on board the S.S. *Europa*, a letter which bears the stamp of his continual tendency to take the lowest place, and to appraise at a high value whatever good was done by others. "For all the instances of your regard I would cherish grateful feelings: I feel how unworthy I am to receive them; but this should not prevent my making acknowledgment to a gracious God who has provided the comfort and blessing I have had by your friendship, and the rich associations I am able to connect with it. How can I ever forget the pleasure, pure and full, which has been received in

our walks on the Sabbath afternoons, home from 'the cottages,' when pleasant conversation occupied us, and the unveiling to one another of similar thoughts. How do such recollections cause the moments thus enjoyed to sparkle in the retrospect. . . . I would thank you all for the forbearance which my weakness and thoughtlessness may at any time have called forth. I would desire to offer the prayer that of His mercy God may be pleased to keep us from all evil; that we may cultivate humility and self-denial, and a desire for the welfare of others, and every grace; that He may give us His peace and cause His face to shine on us." Thus did he school himself and make inquisition of his own heart. The foundations of an energetic, eager, unselfish character were being strengthened in this early sphere of modest but useful effort.

It may be mentioned in this connection that in November 1850, Mr. Balfour, for the first time, sat down at the Lord's Table. It was a matter upon which the two young friends often had communication with one another. On this subject Mr. Balfour had shown hesitation, which arose from his lowly estimate of his own character and preparedness for the sacred ordinance. When at last he made up his mind to join with the Lord's people in the open confession of

Christ in Canning Street Presbyterian Church, it was a matter of great joy to his comrade, who had some years previously taken this step. Mr. Gibson wrote him a letter of earnest welcome on his decision being taken, and to this letter Mr. Balfour sent the following reply, conceived in his own spirit of lowliness, yet of humble trust in his Redeemer.

"BIRKENHEAD, *2nd November* 1850.

"MY DEAR GIBSON,—I have just received your letter, and I accept, with the most cordial satisfaction, the right hand of fellowship stretched out to me, now that I am on the eve of sitting down with Christ's people at His Table. . . . Let us seek with our whole heart to do honour to 'Him that has loved us;' oh for firm faith to add, 'and washed us from our sins in His own blood: to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.' Let me entreat you to pray that the services of to-morrow may be blessed to us, and that we may feel individually, that partaking of those elements of bread and wine may be both a sign and a seal of the benefits of Christ's death to our otherwise ruined souls.

"I am distressed by the prevalence of sin in every one thing. Accordingly I would tell all men, and would tell the Lord Jesus, I am not worthy to appear at this feast. I can only cry, 'God be merciful to

me a sinner.' Yet I go to Christ's Table to-morrow with something like joy. I desire to believe the testimony given, Christ came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance! Is there not encouragement to the vilest, if only there be belief in this gracious Saviour? Let our cry then be, 'Increase our faith,' 'Help our unbelief.'

"I hope for your friendly counsel, forbearance, and help, to avoid the danger of walking in a way unworthy of my profession, and that we may go on to more sure acquaintance with the things that belong to our peace. And now, in expectation of the great feast, let Christ, with whom we are to hold communion, be all our salvation and all our desire. And think, think, O my soul! of the sacredness of to-morrow, which is to furnish a foretaste of the eternal joy of having fellowship with the Saviour in heaven."

CHAPTER III.

THE CHRISTIAN MERCHANT.

"The crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth."—ISAIAH xxiii. 8.

"We live in deeds not years ; in thoughts not breaths ;
In feelings not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs : he most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best."
—SHAKESPEARE.

"Defer not charities till death ; for certainly, if a man weigh it rightly, he that doth so is rather liberal of another man's than of his own."—BACON.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHRISTIAN MERCHANT.

WHEN he commenced business for himself, Mr. Balfour intended to succeed; he felt that he had it in him to succeed. He knew that true success could only be realised with the blessing of God, and the proceeds of that success were to be consecrated to the service of God and of his fellow-men. One of his foremost subjects of concern was the application to a right use of the expected gains of the future. Those who knew him will feel that the picture drawn of him at the outset of his business career, by his partner Mr. Williamson, in the following simple touches, is altogether characteristic of the man. He says, "Before we began business, we had naturally to prepare and arrange articles of partnership. I remember with what earnestness he proposed that we should set aside a certain percentage of our profits for religious and benevolent purposes, before any division was made among the partners. His wish was cordially

assented to, but the generous purpose originated with him. And to his dying day he never ceased to be thankful for having had so many opportunities of helping and furthering good objects, by means of that Benevolent Fund. It is unnecessary to say that his benefactions were not limited by the measure of this fund: for it is well known that out of his own individual means, he was one of the most generous of givers."

A business begun in a spirit like this, was not likely to lack the dew of Heaven's blessing. The large heart of the man was about to find wider scope for its beneficence, than when he wrote, in the year 1843, the following characteristic note to his little brother: "My dear Henry, I enclose you one shilling for pocket money, of which you will please take no notice to anybody; also half-a-dozen postage stamps to keep you from spending your pence. I daresay you are sometimes rather hard up for a little money. When you are in that unfortunate predicament, drop me a line, and I can always afford you sixpence at least." The boy was father of the man, both in the readiness to give according to his means, and in the wish that "no notice should be taken to anybody."

Lord Bacon's wise words on the use of riches have never found more beautiful exemplification than in

Mr. Balfour's case. "Of great riches there is no real use, except it be in distribution: the rest is but conceit. There is a custody of them, or there is a power of dole and donative of them, or a fame of them: but no solid use to the owner. . . . Seek not proud riches, but such as thou mayest get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly."

The aspirations and resolves of Mr. Balfour for his business life call to mind the words reported to have been spoken, not long before his death, by the famous Richard Whittington, who died in 1423. "The fervent desire and busy intention of a prudent, wise, and devout man shall be, to cast before and make sure the state and the end of this short life with deeds of mercy and of pity; and specially to provide for those miserable persons whom the penury of poverty insulteth, and to whom the power of seeking the necessities of life by art or bodily labour is interdicted." *

But there was more to be done than to "cast before" and arrange for the conscientious and generous disposal of profits. The profits must first be made, and to this object the young merchant turned his powers. "During the first decade of our business life," says Mr. Williamson, "it was of course his duty to throw his energy into our business concerns; and

* "English Merchants," by H. R. Fox Bourne, p. 60.

while I dare say we all did our best, I have no hesitation in saying that he, more than any of us, laid the foundations of our business. He was possessed of untiring energy and enthusiasm, qualities which, before the era of the electric telegraph and submarine cables, were perhaps of more importance in commercial affairs than they are now. That energy, it is true, nearly led us into trouble and disaster, for the crisis of 1857 came upon us at a time when our operations were, perhaps, beyond what our means at that time warranted. The anxieties of that period made a deep impression upon him, and left a mark which was never completely effaced. He was full of self-reproach for what he considered to have been a grievous sin rather than an error of judgment; and ever afterwards he was tremblingly solicitous that our business commitments should not exceed what prudence dictated. For some time the anxieties of 1857–1858 pressed heavily upon him, and the recollection of them brought him at times almost to the verge of despondency. But even in this, his singularly beautiful character shone out. It was not the burden which he had himself to carry that disquieted him, but the worry and distress which he imagined he had brought upon others.

". . . While his whole soul was fired with the desire to distribute with unstinted hand, yet in view of obliga-

tions which necessarily arose out of a large and varied business, and which rested upon him and his firm, the necessity was laid upon him to permit a reasonable accumulation of capital. In his later days he frequently made use, both in speech and writing, of this expression, 'God helping me, I am now determined, so far as I can, to preserve the root while seeking to make good use of the fruit.' It was well known that having acquired such an amount of capital as he considered adequate to his business obligations, he had for some years made up his mind to allow no further accumulation of his means, but to spend them, as God prospered him, for the promotion of Christian enterprises and social reforms. During one or two years of unremunerative business near the close of his life, he was greatly distressed to find himself unable, except by trenching on what he called the "roots," to give with so free a hand as he had done during many previous years.

"He had not the remotest intention of retiring from business. It was his wish to die in harness; and this he did, alas! at an age and at a time when many of us thought the world could ill afford to lose him. When rallied by friends about the possibility of his some day becoming a large landed proprietor, he would break out, in his own manner, into derisive

laughter at the very suggestion of such a thought. He was wont to say he would not exchange the proud position of a British merchant, with all its interests and opportunities of usefulness, for that of the richest landed proprietor of the realm. He frequently spoke with pity of men who had retired from business, and who had gone to the country to mope and wither and rust. His sole object in continuing to follow business pursuits in Liverpool was, that he might employ the position thus given him, as a fulcrum, by means of which to exercise a salutary influence on the town with which he had been so long and so closely associated.

". . . When I was abroad, his private letters, amid all the hurry and excitement of business, invariably gave expression to his interest in God's work in some quarter or other, and were constantly aimed at lifting us up to higher motives and considerations than the mere successful prosecution of business."

And yet his letters afford little help in the delineation of his character. They contain snatches of devout thought and Christian feeling; but even those which deal with philanthropic questions are directed, for the most part, to some pressing practical point, the interest of which has now passed away.

Suffice it to say, that the business of the firm was

conducted on principles of the highest integrity and honour. Soon after Mr. Balfour had been called away from earth, the present writer met a merchant who said to him, "For a long course of years I have done business with Mr. Balfour. Shall I tell you why? It was because I saw that when an order was given to him, it was carried out exactly as if he were acting for himself. Of course I could not but stick to him." Happily the same thing may be said of many others. The principle on which he acted lies at the root of all honourable business.

Many transactions which are of a questionable character are excused by the familiar saying, "Business is business." There was nothing on which Mr. Balfour looked with greater scorn, than the idea, that there was a mercantile code of morals and a Christian code. He believed it to be imperative on the man of business to be upright and fair under all competition and in all circumstances. On one occasion he entered into a written agreement with a merchant on certain terms. An uncomfortable conviction crept into his mind that it was too much to the advantage of his own firm. On reaching his office he said to one of his clerks, "Take back this agreement to Mr. ——, and tell him that I wish it cancelled: I think it ought to have been more in his favour than it is."

The sensitively conscientious and self-forgetting character of Mr. Balfour at times manifested itself in peculiar ways. Mr. Williamson says: "Sometimes his scrupulosity approached to business eccentricity. When at Valparaiso he perplexed the minds of his salesmen occasionally by insisting that, even for most saleable and well-bought goods, they should not charge beyond a low percentage of profit. And it was with difficulty he could be convinced that it was essential to secure a fair profit on fresh well-bought goods, in view of the losses which had to be faced on goods which had become difficult of sale.

"At one time, in the realisation of produce at Liverpool, he set his face like a flint against selling to men who were merely 'speculators,' and insisted on sales being made only to dealers, manufacturers, and consumers. It was impossible to maintain that position. This became apparent to him on one occasion upon a serious fall in values, before which he had refused to take satisfactory prices because they were offered by a 'mere speculator.' Much to his discomfort, he had eventually to submit to a heavy loss. Such eccentricities or errors—if errors they be—had all a leaning to virtue's side, and testified to that scrupulous consideration for others which formed so strong a feature of his character."

Certain it is that the man who could act thus was not likely to violate the rule of merchant life quoted above, viz., to seek only such riches as he might "get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly." To most of us the law is difficult which requires us to "love our neighbour as ourselves." To those who knew him well, it sometimes appeared as if his difficulty was to love himself as his neighbour. Not only in the transactions of business, but in many little ways in the home circle and among his friends, it seemed as if he were more sensibly affected by pleasures and advantages when given to others, than when they fell to his own lot. The idea of securing any benefit to himself, at the cost of loss or trouble to another, was a thing wholly alien to his generous nature.

To be "not slothful in business," and at the same time "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," is a task which many have found hard. Mr. Balfour acted on a rule which greatly helped him in the effort to combine diligence in his worldly affairs with the service of the Lord. He was always determined to keep business matters in their proper place, and to confine them to their proper hours. In Valparaiso it was customary for the heads of the English houses to have the young men from their offices living with

them; and there Mr. Balfour from the first made it a strict rule not to permit any reference to business to be made at table or in the house. Any breach of this rule greatly displeased him. It was his desire to cherish, in the minds of those associated with him, concern for higher and nobler interests. And even in the busiest seasons, his own spirit, dismissing office cares on the expiry of office hours, was free to expatiate in the fields of usefulness and beneficence in which he found his peculiar delight.

We have seen what indomitable energy characterised his early business life. In his later years he was more "restful" in business concerns, but never slack-handed. It cannot be doubted that the welcome change, from business to beneficence, served as a refreshing influence to his mind, and reacted favourably on his power for the discharge of his duties as a merchant. The man, who day and night has business on the brain, will not do even business so well as he who daily at the appointed time throws aside its cares, that he may advance the kingdom of God and the welfare of man;

> "For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
> And though a late, a sure reward succeeds."

On the 23rd of March 1864 Mr. Balfour was married to Jessie, third daughter of the Rev. Dr. Roxburgh of

Glasgow, whose ministry, in early life, he had attended in Dundee. The union was one in every way happy and helpful, and one for which Mr. Balfour never ceased to thank God.

His letters at this time breathe a spirit of profound gratitude to the Giver of all his blessings. Writing to Mr. Williamson he says: "I wish to let you know how extremely grateful to myself and to my wife have been the hearty feelings you both cherish at the enormous addition which has now been brought to my happiness. I do not lose sight of the main element of congratulation afforded to my own mind, but I do sincerely rejoice that, in addition, I have the further gratification that such thorough satisfaction has been expressed regarding our marriage, on all hands. I am happy to believe the union to be thoroughly in harmony with Dr. and Mrs. Roxburgh's feelings. For one thing, it seems to link Mrs. Roxburgh to Fife again, and this is a happiness perhaps to her and her husband, but doubly so to all our connection. You cannot think how many different sources of congratulation exist around the union. Yesterday's post brought me perhaps the most valuable letters that I can remember having received: the West Coast matters all so satisfactory, things in Liverpool going on pleasantly: and then I had such a splendid

letter from Dr. Roxburgh; I think it must be kept, and read on every anniversary of the happy 23rd."

Again he writes in a merry vein: "I have not failed to point out to Dr. Roxburgh the coincidence you refer to, that you went to Free St. John's of Edinburgh for your wife, and I to Free St. John's of Glasgow. It is also odd we should each have selected the third daughter in the family, and that in both families the youngest girl is a bright-eyed lassie called 'Nell.'"

There was a vein of gaiety and mirth in Mr. Balfour which was not visible to all eyes. It was overgrown and overshadowed by the intensity with which he pursued the serious and solemn aims of his life. There were, however, times when the old bent asserted itself. Among children especially he was often free and frolicsome as one of themselves, entering with his whole heart into their amusements, and rejoicing in their joys. He possessed in a peculiar degree the gift of mimicry; but finding that it tended towards discourtesy, and sometimes gave pain, he deliberately abandoned its exercise.



CHAPTER IV.

SERVICE.

"Oh, hearts are bruised and dead,
And homes are bare and cold,
And lambs, for whom the Shepherd bled,
Are straying from the fold.

To comfort and to bless,
To find a balm for woe,
To tend the lone and fatherless
Is angels' work below."—BISHOP HOW.

"I do nothing. I am a chisel which cuts the wood. The Carpenter directs it. If I lose my edge, He must sharpen me. If He puts me aside and takes another, it is His own good will. None are indispensable to Him; He will do His work with a straw equally well."—GENERAL GORDON.

"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality."—ROM. xii. 13.

CHAPTER IV.

SERVICE.

ON one of the latest occasions when Mr. Balfour was permitted to attend public worship, he stepped into the vestry at the close and said to the present writer, with the light which sparkled in his eye when his spirit was deeply stirred, and with the emphatic utterance which at such a time was inseparable from his words, "Yes, service, service; *that* is the word for the Christian—service." His whole walk was governed by the principle of service. Every day of his life seemed to exemplify the counsel of the Apostle, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men; especially unto them who are of the household of faith." And thus his footsteps were blessed. Wherever he trod, the grass grew greener. Leven, Liverpool, Valparaiso, San Francisco, can all testify to the truth of what we say. Yet, while ever ready in a good cause to help and to give, he had a quick eye for the detection of shams, and a certain

power of making them shrivel up before him, more by his manner than his words.

Much of the service he rendered was doubtless known only to himself and the recipients. But if we examine his footsteps in any period of his life, or in any sphere of his activity, we find traces of his unquenchable generosity, his passion for doing good, for alleviating suffering, for ministering help. "I *am* my brother's keeper" seemed to be the motto of every day he lived.

When he was but a youth and had little to give, it came to his knowledge that two ladies, whom he had known from his childhood in Fifeshire, had met with adverse circumstances: they were struggling with difficulties, and were in danger of having to leave their home. He immediately began to send them what help it lay in his power to give; and in order that this help might be increased, he gave up smoking and put some special limitations upon his own daily diet. Self-denial in youth is the surest guarantee for beneficence in manhood.

While speaking of kind deeds done in Fifeshire, it may be mentioned that in after years it was his joyful privilege to take a large share in the founding of the Greig Institute, which does an excellent work, especially among young men, in his native Leven.

As his means increased his benefactions increased. On one occasion, when business was very prosperous, he was restless at night. He rose and paced his bedroom with rapid stride. When the anxious question was put to him if anything were wrong, his answer was, "This will never do at all; we are growing too rich: we must find new outlets for that with which God has so abundantly blessed us. I was just revolving in my mind what causes it would be best to help."

A relation of Mr. Balfour died, leaving behind him four children who, he had reason to fear, might be but slenderly provided for. He travelled to the town in which the deceased had resided, to attend his funeral. At its close, he stepped into the bank with which his friend had dealt, and after some conversation with the banker, he wrote a cheque for a large sum of money, and said, "Just add that to the account: and nothing need be said about it."

The following letter from the widow of a clergyman addressed to Mrs. Lundie illustrates the point of which we are speaking. It throws beautiful light, also, upon other features, such as the breadth and catholicity of his mind; but we do not choose to break up the letter into parts.

"—— VICARAGE, *October* 2, 1886.

"My memories of dear Mr. Balfour are very bright and happy ones. It was at the time of the preparations for Mr. Moody's visit to Liverpool in 1875 that my husband and Mr. Balfour were first drawn together. A very warm friendship sprang up between them. They were one in their deep interest in things spiritual, and no differences in other matters ever seemed of any importance to either. I remember well on the occasion of an election in the town, when my husband's vote was recorded for the candidate who was being earnestly opposed by Mr. Balfour, our hearts were cheered by his calling at our house the evening of the Sunday he was spending in Liverpool, to bring Mrs. Balfour to our mission-room service.

"The fact of their belonging to different Churches seemed to be scarcely recognised at times. I can recall a letter we received from Mr. Balfour in the summer of 1880, when there had been some anxiety as to the appointment of a first Bishop for Liverpool. In this letter he expressed his warm approval of the appointment made, adding that he wished to mark the event by a little thankoffering, and this was enclosed in a cheque for £100.

"I can scarcely trust myself to speak of my own deep indebtedness to this dear friend. On two different occasions he sent my dear husband abroad in the hope of restoring his failing health. How sensibly impressed with Mr. Balfour's wondrous liberality he was may be best gathered, from a last message to him, from his dying bed at Marseilles. 'Tell Mr. Balfour, I will be among the first to welcome him to the everlasting habitations.'

"But it was when I was about to leave Liverpool with my family that the most touching proof was given me of his loving remembrance of my husband. And now I love to recall it and love to tell it you. A letter was brought me enclosing the large sum of £500. I copy our dear friend's own words, because they show the spirit in which all his gifts were made. With kindest reference to the ministry of my dear husband, his gift is mentioned in the most delicate and beautiful way. He says, 'I am sure you will be pleased when I mention that the Lord has blessed us last year again with prosperity in business, and from the sum, which He has graciously committed to me as His steward, I wish to make a contribution to your and Mr. R——'s children, which I am sure you will accept from Him.'"

There was a touch of delicacy about all his gifts,

which made it easy even for the sensitive to receive them. And though he loved his own Church, and repeatedly said to us that he would live and die in it, yet his heart went out to all of every name that loved his Master, as to brothers and sisters.

What Mr. Balfour's warm heart was capable of doing, even in cases which might not seem to have a strong claim upon him, may be gathered from the following statement, which a friend has furnished. For obvious reasons names are not given.

"I had the good fortune to make Mr. Balfour's acquaintance, when he went out to South America in 1866 with Mrs. Balfour and his little daughter. I was going to the River Plate with my wife and two young daughters, and we were fellow-passengers. Owing to an accident which happened to the machinery, we were obliged to put back to Cork for repairs, and were detained there for a few days. We made up a party to visit Killarney and other places, and we were all charmed with the brightness, geniality, and gentleness of our newly-found friend. He was always on the alert to do any act of kindness to the ladies and the little ones. Self seemed forgotten or obliterated. On the voyage he visited the sailors a good deal, speaking to them, reading to them, and distributing interesting little books and tracts, of which he always

carried a supply. We parted at Monte Video, and did not meet again till his return from Chile.

"What always struck me in him was his quick and tender sympathy with the sorrowing and the suffering. Inconvenience, discomfort, sacrifice, never seemed to weigh with him for a moment, where he thought his presence or his words would bring alleviation.

"Personally, I was on two occasions the object of kindnesses and sacrifices which prominently set forth this beautiful phase of his character. In 1874 I was ordered by my doctor to go to St. Moritz, my wife being unable to accompany me. On informing him of my intended journey, and remarking on its loneliness, he most kindly offered to accompany me. Arrived at our destination, we met several congenial friends, such as Mr. and Mrs. Donald Matheson, Mr. and Mrs. James E. Matheson; and whether climbing the mountains or traversing the glaciers, his bright and cheery presence gave additional zest to every trip we made. I think I see him now starting with the above-named friends for the Morteratsch glacier, as we sang in chorus 'Safe in the arms of Jesus.'

"During a drive one day, we passed through a village in the Albula Pass, the greater part of which had been burnt down a few days before. He stopped the carriage, made inquiries for the *Curé*, and a few

days later sent a handsome donation for the relief of the most destitute. In another small village he called on the Protestant Pastor, and gathering that his means were very straitened, he begged his acceptance of a considerable gift.

"The crowning act of Mr. Balfour's kindness and generosity towards myself occurred under the following circumstances. In 1876, through a succession of unfortunate business transactions, I was brought into such a critical position, that unless I could obtain time and forbearance, I was threatened with the loss of a large fortune, or the greater part of it. I had never had any business relations with Mr. Balfour or his firm, which might have furnished me with a reason for invoking his advice or assistance. Moreover, at the time when my misfortunes were pressing on me, he was overwhelmed with grief at the loss of his eldest son, Alister, which had taken place the previous week. Yet on receipt of a letter from me, he telegraphed that he would come up next day—it happened to be his birthday—and advise what he thought best to be done. He reached London in the afternoon, spent several hours in my office, went carefully into the statement I laid before him, and advised me as to what he considered it necessary to do, in order to save my credit and my property. Expressing

his deep sympathy and his earnest desire to help me, he returned that evening to Mount Alyn. In a few days he advised that his firm was prepared to assist me with a large sum of money under most favourable conditions, and that he had also induced another friend to come forward with assistance. The temporary strain was gradually relieved: my property was saved for my family. But for him it would have been sacrificed. Although I and mine owed so much to him, he never in after years alluded to the subject, and seemed to object to my referring to all we owed to him. I have always reflected on this act of self-renouncing sympathy as an index of his generous and noble nature. . . . He was always so bright in his sayings and doings, that I have often thought of him as one who was marching along, animated by the strain of celestial music which those around him did not hear. Surely there never was a nobler, braver, gentler, Christian gentleman than Alexander Balfour!"

The Rev. James Towers of Birkenhead, whose ministry he at one time attended and greatly valued, lost a daughter in 1859. Mr. Balfour wrote him a letter of warm sympathy and enclosed a cheque, adding: "I have reaped your spiritual things, and hope you will never refuse to share in my carnal

things." Mr. Towers did not fully realise the depth of the spring of gratitude which had been opened in Mr. Balfour's heart, till his retirement from the active work of the ministry in 1880. In a letter dated the 13th of August in that year, Mr. Balfour says to him: "It was under your ministry that I was first led to that entire surrender of my heart to the Lord which marked an epoch in my existence, the gracious results of which will be unending. While we live on earth we can but faintly realise what is implied in the text, 'A child of God by faith in Jesus Christ.'"

Strokes of affliction fell fast and heavily on Mr. Towers year after year, till five of his daughters were committed to the grave. Mr. Towers narrates that, in consequence of the obligations connected with sickness and death, he felt himself constrained to depart, for a season, from his usual practice of dedicating a fixed proportion of his income to the Lord's cause. At the close of this period, however, with his family greatly reduced, he felt warranted in resuming his old habit. He accordingly gave £50. "What was my surprise then," he says, "when about the New Year I received a cheque for £50, the exact amount at which I had assessed myself. Next year the same favour was repeated, and I am quite assured in both cases it came from Mr. Balfour. This was

the Lord's doing, and perhaps it contained a reproof to myself for withholding, even at the worst of times, a portion so due to my Saviour. . . . In a long life-time I have known many good men, and some of them as devout as Mr. Balfour, but I have never intimately known one who seemed so thoroughly, from the time he gave his whole heart to the Lord, *to keep it for the Lord,* and to go from strength to strength without looking back."

The simple incidents recorded above are narrated not because they were of an exceptional character, but as a specimen of the deeds of kindness with which all the path of Mr. Balfour was strewed through life. Often they were unknown save to the recipients, and sometimes those who were benefited were ignorant of the source from which kindnesses had come.

We spoke lately of Mr. Balfour to a clergyman who holds a most important position in an institution that was dear to his heart. "Alexander Balfour!" he exclaimed, his warm heart touched by his memory, "Alexander Balfour! If it had not been for him, I don't know that I should have been alive to-day. He used to come to me when I was run down by work that put a strain upon the heart as well as the body, and he would urge me to go to the country or the

seaside for change, putting a cheque in my hand to enable me to do it: and here I am to this day."

The following letter was addressed to us by the Rev. Charles Garrett, once President of the Wesleyan Conference. It is so graphic in its description of some leading features of the character of Mr. Balfour, and at the same time so characteristic of the writer himself, that we cannot do otherwise than present it in its entirety, as it flowed fresh from a loving and sorrowing heart.

"My acquaintance with Mr. Balfour extended over about twelve years, and those years are studded with precious memories. He was the most princely man I have ever known. The good of man and the glory of God were his supreme ideas. It was his 'meat and his drink to do the will of his Father.' My first acquaintance with him was at Mr. Moody's meetings, and the wonderful success of those meetings was greatly the result of his influence. I especially remember the eagerness with which, at the all-day convention, he grasped my proposal for the establishment of what are known as 'Cocoa Rooms.' As soon as I had made the proposal, Mr. Moody turned to him and said, 'This is just the thing you want; will you take hold of it?' and his hearty reply, 'I will,' secured the success of the movement. My

suggestion would have been useless but for his endorsement, and the British Workman Company is *one* of his monuments.

"Soon after the establishment of the Company, the time arrived when, according to Wesleyan usage, I was to be removed from Liverpool. As soon as Mr. Balfour heard of this, he came to me and said, 'This must not be; you are exerting an influence for good just where you are most needed, and you must remain.' I told him that the rules of our Church were never relaxed on this point. With the impetuosity which was one of his characteristics when his heart was set upon anything, he said, 'But they will have to be relaxed in your case.' I thought it impossible, but he set to work, memorialised the Conference, and brought such pressure to bear, that, to my own astonishment, the Conference gave way, and I was reappointed to Liverpool. This has changed my destiny and that of my children. I established the Liverpool Wesleyan Home Mission, which has now stations in various parts of the city, worked by a staff of two ministers, seven lay-agents, and a number of voluntary workers. This Mission is therefore *another* of his monuments.

"As to personal kindnesses, they are almost innumerable. In every imaginable way he cheered me on,

and helped me in my work. He never met me without words of cheer, and when help was needed it was given, as he of all the men I have known knew how to give. When, ten years ago, under multiplied labours, my health gave way, and I fainted in the pulpit, he was at my house in a few hours, and everything that could be done to assist in my recovery was done, before most of the members of my own Church had heard of my illness. As soon as I could be moved he took me to his own residence at Mount Alyn, and there for many weeks he watched over me with more than a brother's care. My restoration was mainly the result of his kindness. My experience at Mount Alyn suggested to me the importance of something being done to provide for the ministers of the Wesleyan Church who might be in sickness without a Mr. Balfour to assist them, and I set to work and raised a House of Rest at Colwyn Bay, where ministers and their families should have such a rest as I had enjoyed at Mount Alyn. A fund also has been established, by which other ministers can be sent to Hydropathic Institutions without charge. Thus our Wesleyan Ministers' Rest Fund is *another* of Mr. Balfour's monuments. Having said so much, do you wonder that to me his name is 'as ointment poured forth?' 'A prince and a great man' fell when

Alexander Balfour passed away. He left a gap that can never be refilled."

Side by side with this letter, may be placed one from the pen of the Rev. W. Hay M. H. Aitken, in whose remarkable evangelistic labours Mr. Balfour took the deepest interest :—

"Alexander Balfour's life is written on the hearts of many of us, and will remain there as long as memory lasts.

"I made his acquaintance, I think, at the house of our common friend, the late Mr. Rowe, of the Dingle. He had been up till then an utter stranger to me, and I had no reason to suppose that he took any particular interest in my work. Great was my surprise, therefore, when I received a letter from him, some little time afterwards, containing a cheque for £50, to be employed in helping forward my parochial work. This, like so many of his gifts, was, if I remember rightly, entirely unsolicited, and it was the first of a long series of acts of benevolence, to which I was largely indebted for whatever of outward success seemed to attend my ministry in Everton.

"The acquaintance thus commenced by unlooked-for kindness on his part, and natural gratitude on mine, soon ripened into the closest personal friendship, which did not by any means cease when my work at Liverpool came to an end. I had therefore

abundant opportunities of observing, and, I may say, studying his character, and there are few whom I have thus closely observed who have left so happy an impression on my mind. Of his princely liberality it is scarcely necessary for me to speak; for, though he was far from being ostentatious in his charity, it was known to all. But I may say he was one of the few men one meets—alas! that they should be few—who evidently felt giving to be one of the keenest pleasures of life. He would almost lead you to feel that you were doing the kindness in accepting, rather than he in bestowing, his munificent assistance.

"But to pass on to other characteristics, it used to do one distinct good to be thrown into contact with one who was so intensely, and, shall I say, resolutely sanguine. He lived at the dawn of a millennium, commencing already in his own enthusiastic anticipations. You would never hear him talk nonsense about 'the good old times,' or find him casting a wistful, lingering look behind. Poor dear old grimy, drink-cursed Liverpool, with all its squalor and wretchedness, he not only loved, as Adam may have loved Eden, but would insist upon regarding as being within almost a measurable distance of a Utopian condition. And it was not only to the town of his election, that these sanguine anticipations were con-

fined. He believed from his heart that God and good and right are stronger than the devil and evil and wrong, and therefore must carry the day. We should most of us add to this confession of faith, 'sooner or later;' but whereas a great many, perhaps a large majority, of Christian people would say 'later,' he most emphatically maintained '*sooner*.'

"But there was nothing fatalistic in this hope. He believed in bringing about the better state of things which he foresaw, and hence the breadth and warmth of his sympathy with every effort in the right direction. Though brought up amidst religious and theological surroundings, that are usually, (whether rightly or wrongly), supposed to be narrowing, it was almost impossible for him to be narrow. The largeness of his heart expanded his mind, and rendered it possible for him to understand and appreciate what he did not endorse.

"Like most sanguine people, he was impulsive almost to a fault, but then his impulses were generous; and I observed, too, that he usually selected for his most trusted friends and counsellors, men of a cautious and prudent habit of mind, and that he allowed himself to be greatly influenced by their advice, while he supplied the enthusiasm that might otherwise have been lacking in their counsels.

"His religion was that of acts rather than words, yet when he did speak on the subject of religion, one always felt that it lay nearer to his heart than any other. When in his normal condition, his religion was full of brightness, and in this respect he did indeed adorn the doctrine of Christ. Strange that he, to whom the joy of the Lord seemed his strength, should have been allowed to spend long weary months in the dungeon of Doubting Castle, and under the most merciless treatment of Giant Despair. Probably the causes of this trying passage in his experience, though he knew it not, were mainly physical. At the same time, it cannot be denied, that those, who enjoy the blessedness of an unusually sanguine temperament, are liable to sudden and violent reactions, and perhaps he may have been more affected by this than he knew. At any rate his name must be added to the list of the many great and good men—the best perhaps that earth has produced—who, at some point in their history, have been permitted to fall into despondency. Thank God the clouds were clean swept from his sky, ere the day closed, and at eventide there was light.

"Dear, grand, noble man! his was one of the last figures that faded from my eyes as I started on my voyage to America in 1885. Little did I think that

his voyage was so near its end. And when I returned in February 1886, he was again the first to greet me, as I stepped back on to the shore of my native land. Perhaps he will be amongst the first of the many dear ones to reach out a hand of greeting to his old friend, when my last mission has been closed, and a longer voyage comes to its end. Peace to his memory —we shall not see his like again!"

William Rathbone, Esq., M.P., whose name is a household word in Liverpool, was one of those who not only felt the magic of Mr. Balfour's indescribable influence, but sought to fathom the sources of his extraordinary wealth and fruitfulness of service. In a letter to us, written after his death, Mr. Rathbone speaks as follows :—

"It is much more easy to feel than to express the loss that Liverpool has sustained, in Mr. Balfour's death. It is far greater than the loss of the direct influence of his generosity, great as that generosity was, or of his exertions to promote every good cause, unwearied as those exertions were. The influence he exercised over us all effected far more than his own means and time, devoted as they were to the service of his fellow-men, could have accomplished.

"He united, in a degree I have rarely met with in any man, or even in any woman, the three Christian

virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity. He never seemed to doubt that any good object he undertook could be accomplished, or that those whose help he sought would be less willing to aid, than he himself was. By his genial faith and hope, he often made people what he expected them to be; and even when he failed to make the selfish unselfish, or the sordid generous, this did not seem to excite anger or contempt for the individual. I do not remember ever to have heard him express a harsh or severe judgment of any one; he had indignation for the offence, but not for the offender. He was always disposed to exaggerate the sacrifices and exertions of others while unconscious of his own.

"It was this mixture of enthusiasm, geniality, and simplicity of character which enabled him to carry others with him, and exert so powerful an influence in Liverpool, in promoting education and those schemes for the enlightenment and healthy occupation and amusement of the people, by which he hoped to diminish intemperance and increase virtue and happiness amongst his fellow-men."

In smaller matters, the following extract from a letter written by Mr. Balfour to Mrs. Lundie on the 20th December 1879 shows how he carried out the Apostolic precept in reference to doing good to all

men, but "especially to them that are *of the household of faith.*" "I ordered a bale of twenty-five pairs of blankets to be forwarded to you. They are for distribution to godly poor, or to needy widows." Countless deeds of such thoughtful and comforting kindness were the work of the same hand.

It was his habit to make his birthdays the occasion, not so much of receiving gifts, as of giving them.

At a late period of his life, when the demands upon him were excessive, and, through the depression of business, his income was curtailed, he printed a circular postcard regretting that he was "Unable to respond to the appeal, owing to other numerous calls on his time and resources." But though this card passed through the printing-press, it did not go much further. There were very few cases in which he could bring himself to apply it.

A sphere of service which Mr. Balfour found to be most congenial was the Liverpool Young Men's Christian Association. When he first became connected with it, the Association was housed in small and unsuitable premises; it numbered but a scanty roll of members, and its influence in the town was very limited. He saw what a reserve of power was in the Association, and straightway set himself to the task of developing that reserve.

He offered handsome prizes to successful students, he organised evening classes of various kinds for young men in business, and to make provision for these, additional rooms were secured. It was not long, however, before he became convinced that, if the work was to be done on a scale at all commensurate with the requirements of a great city, it would be necessary to erect a large and commodious building, furnished with convenient class-rooms, reading-room, lecture-hall, and all suitable appliances. A site was purchased in Mount Pleasant, and on it a stately and ample pile began to rise. Mr. Balfour was a constant visitor to the building in the course of its erection, keeping a careful eye on the quality of the work, and ready with suggestions for the perfecting of all arrangements. His desire was to make the structure a model building. He watched over it with a fond and unceasing interest, and after encountering some unlooked-for difficulties, he had the joy of seeing the work crowned with success. Before all was completed the cost did not fall much short of £30,000. His friend Mr. Samuel Smith* was closely associated with him in this labour of love, and both bestowed munificent gifts upon the Institution. The services of Mr. D. L. Moody, who was in England

* At present M.P. for Flintshire.

at the time, were secured to lay the foundation-stone; and when the building was completed, the late Lord Shaftesbury formally opened it.

Then followed the great work, of fitting the organisation of the Association, to its enlarged premises and its enlarged sphere of operation. This was undertaken with a devotion which esteemed no time too much to spend, no toil too great to undergo, if only the object could be furthered. Mr. Balfour was for fifteen years President of the Association, and, largely owing to his ceaseless fostering care, he had the joy of seeing his wishes in great measure realised. Mr. A. Ferguson, who was for seventeen years Chairman of Committee, was ever ready to co-operate. The roll of members steadily increased, the advantages offered, material, intellectual, and moral, were multiplied year by year, the Institute made itself felt throughout the city, and the blessing of God manifestly rested upon it. A commencement also was made of a Branch Institution in the north end of the town, which is too distant from the central Institution, for easy access. Along with the able and zealous men who were associated with him in the work, he saw, ere he was called away, his plans carried out. Many young men have had the seeds of divine truth lodged in their hearts in these Institutions,

many wanderers have been led back to the path from which they had strayed, and many sufferers have been helped and comforted. The young men of this great seaport form an exceptionally migratory class, and scattered on distant shores, not a few of the members of the Liverpool Association have carried with them, not only the desire to bless their fellow-men, but the knowledge of the likeliest means of attaining that end. Happily many remain in their own city, who are beginning to occupy positions of influence and honour, which they adorn in the fear of the Lord.

It should be mentioned that Mr. Balfour placed much value on efforts to make the Association attractive and improving on the social side. He delighted in inviting the members and their friends to large social gatherings in the reading-room. And there, all aglow with animation, and in friendliest relation with all the guests, he moved among them, trusted and loved by everybody, himself appearing the happiest and brightest of all the company. Sometimes, as is elsewhere stated, such gatherings on a still larger scale took place on the green sward of the fields of Mount Alyn.

Mainly through the public spirit and the munificence of Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Balfour had the joy of

seeing the magnificent Gymnasium in Myrtle Street acquired for the Young Men's Christian Association. There the young men, under the able management of Mr. Alexander, have the best opportunities for physical exercise and muscular development.

At a large meeting of delegates from Young Men's Christian Associations throughout the country which was held in Liverpool, Mr. Balfour told what most endeared these Institutions to his heart. "I rejoice," he said, "that this Association has got on its very front and forehead the word 'Christian.' We know very well that this word does not always, on earth, carry with it the honour it should carry. The world rejected Christ, and it will reject His followers. Don't let there be any mistake on this point: but I am thankful there are so many young men in Liverpool and elsewhere who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. You see printed around the top of the hall of this Association the words, 'I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.' These words, from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, lead my thoughts from Liverpool and this hall where they are inscribed, to Corinth where they were first read. Corinth was one of the greatest centres of commerce in the Apostles' days, and Liverpool is one of the

greatest centres in our days. St. Paul thought it worth his while to address two of his principal Epistles, and to devote much toil, to Corinth: shall we grudge to give hearty labour to Liverpool? St. Paul knew that the seed sown in Corinth would be scattered with its commerce to many distant lands; and we know that if Liverpool is largely blessed of God, that blessing will travel with merchandise, will float in ships, to far-off countries. Liverpool and Corinth, which I lately visited, are linked together in my mind. As the Apostle laboured for Corinth, may we labour for Liverpool; and He who was Paul's Helper there will be our Helper here. If we learn to know Jesus Christ as Paul did, we shall find that salvation from sin is but the beginning of the business. What shall the end be? With such a hope before us, we shall be able to bear reproach, labour, everything for Him."

Mr. Balfour had a picture of Corinth hung in the reading-hall of the Association, which still reminds us of the sacred linking in his mind, of that city with the city he most loved.

We must pause. We might go over a much wider range of charities in Liverpool and elsewhere, and still meet with Mr. Balfour. But enough has been said. He resembled the good King Hezekiah, of

whom we read, "In every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered." With a Lord High Chancellor of England who was asked the secret of his multifarious achievements, he might have said, "I am a whole man to one thing at a time."

As we thus dwell on the generous deeds of Mr. Balfour, and yet find that while he cared for others, God cared for him and his, we are reminded of another of Liverpool's citizens of bright memory, who was born so long ago as 1685. We refer to Bryan Blundell, the founder of a charity of which he himself, writing in 1751, thus speaks: "The charity school has cost between £2000 and £3000, and was finished in 1718, at which time I gave for the encouragement of the charity £750, being one tenth of what it pleased God to bless me with; and did then purpose to give the same proportion of whatever He should indulge me with in time to come, for the benefit and encouragement of the same charity. So great has been the mercy and providence of God in prospering me in business, that I have made up the £750 to £2000, which I have paid to the use of the school; and my children, six in number, the youngest of them now near thirty years of age, are so far from

wanting or being worse for what I have given to the school, that they are all benefactors to it, some of them more than £100 at a time. I may truly say, whilst I have been doing for the children of the school, the good providence of God hath been doing for mine." *

It is the divine rule, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth." God will be careful for the children of those who are careful for the interests of His children. May men like Bryan Blundell and Alexander Balfour who walk after this rule be multiplied in Liverpool and in our cities—

> "Till each man finds his own in all men's good,
> And all men work in noble brotherhood."

Mr. Balfour had it for a guiding principle to give all he could while he lived. He held it little credit for a man to give, when he left the world, what he had no power to keep. Giving was one of the chief joys of his life; it made him radiant. Hence those who love and labour for their city are disposed to link him with Timothy, of whom the Apostle said, "I have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state."

Mr. Balfour kept before him in his desk, an extract, carefully copied by his own hand, from a paper by

* "English Merchants," by H. R. Fox Bourne, p. 60.

Dr. Duff of Calcutta, on "Liberality as a Means of Sanctification." He evidently framed his giving on the principle it embodies. It is as follows:—"Men's tendency by nature being to trust in uncertain riches, so as to derive their contentment and serenity mainly from them, instead of from faith and confidence in the love and promise of Him who has at His command the boundless stores of providence and grace,—the only effectual antidote of Divine appointment is freely, cheerfully, and liberally to part with them, for the benefit of the poor and ignorant; and thus to create and cherish a growing sense of perpetual dependence on God, a gradual, and ultimately complete, severance from all undue trust in the perishable substance of earth, and a continued accumulation of treasure in heaven." Perhaps it was because Mr. Balfour so steadfastly followed this rule, that the "perishable substance of earth" had so slight a hold upon him.

There exists in Liverpool a large class of children who are destitute, suffering, and in many cases neglected. They are early left orphans, or they find themselves from infancy in the slums of the city, amid an environment unfavourable alike to material and moral well-being. Attention had not been strongly directed to the condition of these poor

children, but some sixteen years ago the public mind began to be stirred in reference to the matter. Mr. Balfour, when calling on Miss Annie M'Pherson, so honourably known for her successful work in the rescue of waifs in London, met her sister Mrs. Birt. With quick discernment of eye and heart, he saw that one was before him, singularly fitted for carrying on a similar effort in Liverpool. He invited Mrs. Birt to Liverpool; and in a meeting of half-a-dozen friends, the work of child-rescue was discussed. The thing was unfamiliar to the little company, and difficulties were foreseen, but the faith and enthusiasm of Mr. Balfour won the acquiescence of all who were present. Very modestly and quietly the enterprise began. A few Christian ladies met to work together and to pray for the perishing. Sympathisers came forward among the merchants of Liverpool, and none earlier or more cordially than Mr. Samuel Smith and Mr. S. Williamson, who has held the post of Chairman ever since the Association began its benevolent career in Liverpool.

The movement has grown and prospered, under the blessing of God. Boys are sheltered in one Home, girls in another. The Committee are taking steps to erect a special building for the "Sheltering Home," as it is fittingly called. Meantime, every year, orphans

and imperilled little ones are gathered in by Mrs. Birt, are cared for, are trained, are instructed in the gospel. The change wrought upon them in a few brief weeks is almost magical. Drawn often from unclean and unkindly homes, their hearts open, as the daisy opens to the sun, under the influence of Christian love and the brightness of their new surroundings. Hope takes the place of gloom, and perhaps of fear.

After preliminary training, the children are taken out to Canada by Mrs. Birt herself, or sent out in batches under suitable superintendents. Three thousand children have thus been rescued from want and danger, and placed in happy homes in Canada. The present writer has visited many of them there, and can bear testimony to the comfort and happiness which they almost invariably find, in the Christian homes of farmers and others selected for their reception. It is believed that not less than 95 per cent. of these children turn out good and useful citizens. For the present, this method of rescuing and providing for our city waifs seems the best and most effectual, as it is certainly the most economical, known to us. Mr. Balfour delighted in the work, turned a copious stream of his liberality into it, and in many ways encouraged Mrs. Birt and her fellow-labourers. He was often present among the little ones, and loved

to watch their changing appearance, as the effects of shelter, food, instruction, and kindness made themselves manifest. He also visited the receiving Home at Knowlton, in the province of Quebec, and satisfied himself in regard to the condition of the children, when on the other side of the Atlantic.

For the rescued little ones, the land to which they go is a veritable land of promise. When nearing the green and sunny shores of Canada on one of the trips, a little girl said, with wistful look, to the writer, "Is this the better land?" As we looked into her bright wondering eyes, we seemed to read the thoughts which passed within. The squalor, the hunger, the poverty, the harshness in deed and coarseness in word of the slum, which she had called home, were all left behind. She had heard and had been taught, with other little ones, to sing of a "happy land, far, far away," where such things had no place.

Bright sunshine bathed the beautiful shore of the St. Lawrence, peace rippled on the quiet glancing waters, kindness was round about the child like a garment. Was it strange if the enchantment of a change so sudden and so great was upon her, and if in her little mind the thought of the "land that is very far off" was sweetly blended with what she felt, when

first she gazed upon the fair land that was to be her earthly home? May the green fields of Canada prove to this simple child, and to many of our British waifs, the way to the country where the pastures are yet more green and the waters yet more still.

Among the many objects which shared Mr. Balfour's interest, there was perhaps none which appealed more directly to his loving heart, none which he regarded with more confidence and thankfulness, than this work of child-emigration.

At the annual meetings of the "Sheltering Home" and of the "Ragged School Union," Mr. Balfour hammered with persistent energy at strong drink, and the lavish facilities for obtaining it, as the main producers of destitution and crime.

In Mr. Balfour's wanderings the world over, it was the same with him; his heart was always devising liberal things for the causes he loved. No interest of travel, no novelty of scene, could repress his loving help. We give a brief extract from his diary in 1882, as a specimen of many such:—"*Athens, May* 18.—Devoted the day till four o'clock to writing. Wrote to Dr. Trumbull my sympathies with Mrs. Trumbull and himself, on the death of dear Mary. Made offer, subject to approval of Mr. Williamson, Mr. Merwin, and himself, of founding a Training Institution at

Valparaiso, for Chilian school masters and mistresses, and of its maintenance for five years."

His brother-in-law, Dr. R. Roxburgh, writes: "I remember one day in the autumn of 1883, when I was with Mr. Balfour in New York, he returned to our hotel from the American Board of Missions in great spirits, saying, 'I have found just the man for ——— (a missionary station in Chile), and I shall have the pleasure of myself supporting him there.'"

An example, like that on which we have been dwelling, teaches us where lie the real value of life and the true use of means. The weighty words of Canon Westcott on this theme are well worthy of being pondered. He says: "Life, then, we can see, consists not in abundance, in the overflowing richness of unemployed resources; it springs not spontaneously from the things which we possess, from our original endowments, as the necessary product of natural gifts. It is the opportunity of the individual to win for God, by God's help, that which lies within his reach; to accomplish, on a scale little or great, the destiny of humanity as it has been committed to him: to consecrate, it may be, splendid wealth to common service; to transfigur sordid cares by a divine vision." *

There were some spheres in which Mr. Balfour

* "Social Aspects of Christianity," Preface, pp. 6, 7.

was asked, but did not consent, to serve. He was on more than one occasion invited to become a candidate for a seat in Parliament. The matter was carefully considered, and it was his deliberate judgment that that was not the field in which he could do best service. He used to say that his post was, to take a share in the great work of educating that public opinion, upon which all valuable legislation must be based. And doubtless he judged rightly. He was in full sympathy with the Liberal party in the state, but with his temperament and character, it would have been impossible for him to work on party lines. He would have found himself in frequent and perhaps impatient embarrassment, between the ideal at which he aimed, and the possibilities of practical legislation. The man who laboured most, and most practically, for the social and moral elevation of his countrymen was his man, whether Whig or Tory. The great questions bearing on the amelioration of the condition of the people, with which his head, heart, and hands were full, were better served by him outside the House of Commons.

He accepted a commission as Justice of the Peace for Denbighshire. In that capacity he did what he could to check crime, and abridge the sources of temptation in the county; but he felt, and perhaps

chafed under, the limitations which a fair consideration of all the interests involved must impose on the action of every righteous magistrate, in administering the existing license-law. The rate of possible progress was painfully slow. This experience stimulated the desire for improved license legislation, of which we shall have by-and-by to speak.

It is not possible for even the best of men to do the best of service in every department. God has not so distributed gifts to mankind. Mr. Balfour had, through life, to contend with the hastiness of temper which characterised him in childhood. But he had gained such mastery over it, especially in his later years, that many who were closely associated with him saw no traces of it. So much cannot be said in reference to the impetuosity which was natural to him. It had its uses, and helped to overbear many obstacles in his career of beneficence. But it had its drawbacks also, as his friends sometimes felt, if unable to arrive at the same conclusion with himself. From the intensity of his own convictions, he found it difficult to comprehend or brook divergence of opinion, on points connected with what he deemed urgent duty, in the interest of his fellows. Yet it was a fine thing to watch the struggle which he maintained with his impetuous nature, and to see him at times, after days

of reflection, entirely abandon some cherished position, and unconditionally lay down his arms. A certain sense of the danger arising from his eager impetuosity appears in the circumstance, that the trusted friends, to the test of whose criticism he was in the habit of submitting his own conclusions, were men distinguished for coolness and sobriety of judgment. And without unduly drawing aside the veil which conceals the sanctities of the home, it may be added, that no counsel was more valued by him, than that of his own wife; nor could he find in his heart to persist in any plan or purpose, in which his eager impetuosity was not buttressed by her calm and deliberate approval.

He appears to have enjoyed almost entire freedom from speculative doubts, in religious matters. This immunity was favourable to the course of Christian activity, in which he delighted. But it unquestionably tended to disqualify him for some branches of service. He could not put himself in the position, nor understand the perplexities, of men of a speculative turn of mind. His grasp of "those things which are most surely believed" among Christians, never relaxed. If a side-glance rested for a moment on the agnostic or sceptical views of the day, he immediately plunged into useful work, and was satisfied. He could not, there-

fore, be a helpful counsellor of young men whose faith was disturbed, or whose minds were unsettled by honest doubts. This task was for others, not for him; unless, indeed, we recognise that a life like his, of pure motive and of lofty aim, contained in it, an argument, more potent than logic can formulate, for the reality of those principles which had made him what he was.



CHAPTER V.

FOOTSTEPS AMONG SEAMEN.

"Peter answered Him and said, Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water. And He said, Come."

—MATT. xiv. 28, 29.

"When hidden is each guiding-star,
Flash out the beacon's light afar;
From mist and rock and shoal and spray
Protect the sailor on his way;
Keep by Thy mighty hand, oh, keep
The dwellers on the homeless deep."

—HORATIUS BONAR.

CHAPTER V.

FOOTSTEPS AMONG SEAMEN.

DURING the whole of his business career, Mr. Balfour took the deepest interest in seamen. His success in life was built largely upon the services of sailors. For him it was impossible to receive a benefit, without an effort to repay it. Seamen in his view were not mere instruments for advancing the fortunes of shipowners and merchants; they were men with human bodies, with reasonable minds, with immortal souls. In all these respects they must be cared for. The improvement of the condition of the sailor became a passion with him. There was nothing about which he was more careful in reference to his own ships, than the accommodations and comfort of the forecastle. When at one period of his life he resided at Valparaiso, it was his delight to board his own and other ships, and enter into free converse with the men about all their interests, and especially about their spiritual welfare. Often might he be seen in the forecastle reading the Bible to or with the men.

His love for sailors was hereditary. His mother before him took a very deep interest in their welfare, and scanned their movements with a discriminating eye. It is said that she minutely examined the shipping lists, and could tell fairly the whereabouts of every sailor and his ship, belonging to the Fifeshire district in which she dwelt.

One morning in March 1873, Mr. Thomas Matheson received a message from Mr. Balfour that he wanted to see him. On repairing to the office, Mr. Matheson found his friend bathed in tears, and evidently in the deepest sorrow. One of the ships of the firm, the *Chacabuco*, while off the Great Orme's Head the previous night, had been run into by a coasting steamer, and had gone down with all hands but three. His kind heart pictured not only the struggles of the sinking sailors, but the sudden sorrow of their darkened homes. "Oh, my poor men!" exclaimed the heart-stricken merchant. To him the loss of property was of small concern compared with the loss of human lives. Among the drowned was Captain Ritchie, a thoroughly Christian man, who had been long in the employ, and exercised an excellent influence over his crews. The sympathetic nature of Mr. Balfour mourned over "his men" almost as if each had been an intimate friend.

He sent for Mr. Legge, the manager of the Apprentices' Home, and commissioned him to go to Leamington, where dwelt the parents of one of the lost apprentices, who was their only child, their all: he was to break as gently as he could the tidings of unutterable woe. Selected messengers were sent to others of the bereaved on the same sad errand. Letters were written to the relatives of all the lost sailors who could not be reached personally; and all that kindness and sympathy could do was done, to alleviate the sorrows of the mourners.

As in all such disasters, there were special circumstances which gave peculiar poignancy to grief. Among the five lost apprentices was one fine lad from Scotland, who was bent on going to sea, his parents giving a reluctant consent. Before the time of which we speak, an appointment was secured for him on board of one of the ships of Messrs. Balfour, Williamson, & Co. Something distasteful at the start displeased him, and he left the ship at Cardiff. Cured of his liking for that vessel, he was not cured of his strong bent for the sea, and entreated the firm to give him another chance. A berth was found for him in the *Chacabuco*. The vessel he forsook reached its haven in safety; the vessel he chose was harboured in the bottom of the sea. Mr. Balfour testified the

tenderest sympathy for the sorrowing parents of this cherished boy. Doubtless the trouble of his spirit, over his dead sailors and apprentices, stimulated him to still greater efforts for the temporal and spiritual interests of the living.

One of the most practical and effective efforts for the benefit of sailors was the formation of the "Liverpool Committee of Inquiry into the Condition of our Merchant Seamen." Of this Committee, which continued its labours for ten years, he was one of the chief projectors. With his friends Mr. Christopher Bushell for chairman and Mr. John Williamson for honorary secretary, this Committee rendered most valuable aid in securing enlightened and beneficent legislation, in the interests alike of the seaman and the shipowner; for it was impossible to improve the condition of the former without conferring a benefit upon the latter. The most patent fruit of the Committee's labours was the passing in 1880, largely through its efforts, of the "Merchant Seamen Payment of Wages and Rating Act." Everything could not be achieved in a single Act, but a great step in advance was taken. The pernicious system of advance-notes was abolished, lodging-houses for seamen were licensed and superintended, the crimping system was effectually checked, arrest of sailors with-

out warrant was abolished. Unhappily some of the provisions of the Act have proved effective only in part. The rating system was excellent, but it has proved practically inoperative from the omission in the Act to provide adequate machinery for putting it in force. The abolition of advance-notes, too, is evaded by the use of a system of bonuses, without which, shipowners complain that they cannot get men to go to sea.

In spite of such drawbacks, however, a valuable gain has been achieved, especially through the indirect effects of the Committee's action. Public attention has been called to the subject; shipowners and others have been put on the track of inquiry as to the evils that require remedy, and the best methods of ameliorating the condition of seamen. Soon after the passing of the Act, a marked improvement was observable in the forecastles and in the dietary of the men; plans were put in operation for the transmission of seamen's wages to their homes, thus enabling them to leave port promptly on arrival, and so to escape from many dangerous influences by which they were formerly surrounded. Thrift and sobriety have palpably grown under these and other beneficial influences; and, as might have been anticipated, there has been improvement likewise in the physique of

the men. Such changes have proved advantageous to shipowners, underwriters, and all connected with our mercantile marine.

In 1876 Mr. Balfour and Mr. John Williamson, as representatives of the Committee, read papers on the subject of our seamen, before the Social Science Congress, held in Liverpool, which gave a further impulse to the cause; and a resolution was passed calling on the Council of the Association to "memorialise Government to take into consideration the question of the condition of our seamen, and their deterioration, in its national and professional aspects." This recommendation was acted upon, and had an important bearing upon the legislation which by and by followed.

When the Act of 1880 had passed the Legislature, the work of the Committee of Inquiry was concluded, and the same year a meeting was summoned to dissolve the Committee. In a speech made at that meeting Mr. Balfour said: "The condition of our seamen in 1870, and the condition of our seamen now, is one that demands the attention, not only of shipowners, but of the general community, and of our Government. Lord Sandon will bear me out, and there are a number of representatives of our leading insurance companies here who also will bear

me out, in saying that the main cause of the loss of property and of life at sea is not the overloading of ships, as Mr. Plimsoll has so earnestly pointed out, is not the deficiency of hulls or defective rigging, but mainly arises from defective seamanship. We cannot be too thankful for the steps which were taken to establish the 'Conway' training-ship, and to obtain a system of examination for our merchant captains and officers, previous to their being appointed to ships. But the further subject of the efficiency of seamen to discharge their duties is one that, till the preparation of this Bill, now happily an Act of the Legislature, had not been dealt with."

At the same meeting, Mr. John Williamson, the able and indefatigable secretary, owing, in great measure, to whose labours the work of the Committee was carried to a successful issue, thus referred to a period of great difficulty and discouragement in the course of their operations: "It is only right to state that but for Mr. Balfour at this time, the Committee, disheartened, were almost disposed to cease further efforts."

This circumstance is characteristic of Mr. Balfour. When once convinced that a cause was right, it was almost an impossibility to discourage him. No difficulty could daunt or deter him. He would say,

"It *must* be done, and God will see us through." His hope in such a case was inextinguishable, and was based on the conviction that God was on the side of truth and justice. Means flowed in, opposition was overcome, and success was attained. One such man engaged in a noble enterprise will spread the contagion of his faith and hope to those who are ready to faint, and will suffice, in emergency, to save a cause from shipwreck. "All things are possible to him that believeth."

The inspiring words, of a writer already quoted, were strikingly exemplified in the invincible hope of this man. "As Christians, we are not left, as other men, to quicken our impulses by noble abstractions or splendid guesses. As Christians, we are not constrained, as other men, to acquiesce in the presence of unconquerable suffering. As Christians, we are not condemned, as other men, to gaze with stern resignation upon the spectacle of lost good. If the Word became flesh, the brotherhood of man is a reality for us. If the Son of God was crucified, the fall, and with it the redemption, are realities for us. If the Son of Man rose again from the dead, the eternal significance of our short space of labour is a reality for us." *

* "Social Aspects of Christianity," p. 7.

There were features in the condition of seamen which early arrested Mr. Balfour's attention. Of these, the want of continuous service is one of the most prejudicial. It lies very near the root of the disadvantages of their occupation. It has a most important bearing on the improvidence, recklessness, and dissipation which too largely characterise them as a class. We may invite them into "Sailors' Homes;" we may shelter them in "Strangers' Rests;" we may appeal to them by seamen's missionaries; but all this and much more will not make up for the want of that salutary bond, which ought to bind the employed to the employer. When shipowners are benevolent men, this bond, if it could be maintained, would be productive of the best results. It may be doubted whether much will ever be done, fundamentally to improve the condition of our sailors, unless this end be secured. When it is remembered that we have to deal with the interests of some two hundred thousand British seamen, and with all who depend upon them, it will be seen that a question of this kind is of far-reaching concern.

Mr. Balfour felt it to be so, and the subject caused him and his partner in business much thought and care. His servants, male and female, and his employés of various kinds on shore, were on a very different

footing from the sailors through whom he was, to some extent, laying the foundations of his fortunes. On the former it was possible to keep a kindly and interested eye, and to attempt at least to exert a healthful moral influence, from day to day and from year to year. His instinct for doing good to all about him, and especially to those who were closely connected with him in business or otherwise, was inextinguishable. Was the seaman to be left outside the wholesome influences which were available for the landsman? The frequent termination of all relation between shipowners and seamen at the close of a voyage, the brief and fugitive character of the connection, placed almost insuperable barriers in the way. He made an effort to overcome these obstacles. His firm for a time paid the travelling expenses of their seamen, when they reached port, to and from their homes, if these were not in Liverpool; they paid them also a modified rate of wages between voyages. But these conditions proving too onerous, the generous plan had to be abandoned.

Another method suggested itself. Could the sailors in their employ be housed in a respectable and comfortable home, provided, on a moderate payment, by the firm; and could they thus be kept together and made to feel the kindly influence of their employers?

It was not found practicable to carry this scheme into effect; and besides, the Liverpool Sailors' Home was doing an excellent work in the same direction, for the seamen of the port in general.

One substantial result, however, grew out of these thoughts and plans. A Home was founded in Duke Street, for apprentices and junior officers. This Home, though intended in the first instance for the young sailors in their own employ, was not limited to these. A large outlay was involved in the founding of this Home, but there was ample reward in the good accomplished. The youths were thus saved from the risks and temptations of such lodgings as many of them might have obtained; they were surrounded by the kindly and Christian influences of the family who were at the head of the Home; their evenings were made pleasant and lively by congenial society, by music, games, &c.

Numerous letters to Mr. Legge, the manager of the Apprentices' Home, from all parts of the world, bear testimony to the gratitude of the apprentices, for the provision thus made for them. In not a few cases, the letters tell of spiritual blessing received in the Home; and the friends of some, who have lost their lives in their perilous calling, have had their sorrow brightened with thanksgiving when they have seen,

through the medium of the correspondence kept up with the Home, that their lost ones had been found ere the end came. When the sea gives up the dead which are in it, there will be precious testimony that this Home was not reared in vain.

A glance at the letters referred to gives touching evidence of the hallowed way in which the Home is linked with the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows, of the boys who have been there, and their parents and friends. A few brief extracts, taken from letters written in 1875, may be given.

"DOUGLAS, ISLE OF MAN, *January* 26, 1875.

"Our worst fears respecting my dear brother Willie have unhappily been realised. A kind letter from the second mate shuts out all hope. He says that the vessel was out of sight five minutes after she struck, and that dear Willie was in one of the boats, which time did not permit them to unfasten. He was swallowed up by the suction of the sinking ship. I can write no further on this awful subject: it is too dreadful. God give us grace to bear it with Christian resignation, and may He bless you for your loving-kindness to our dear lost sailor."

"——— VICARAGE, *May* 21, 1875.

"I beg to thank you sincerely for your kindness to my son Basil when under your care. He was very much pleased with your letter to him, received yesterday, and so, I must add, were his father and I. You are indeed a kind friend to young sailors far away from their parents. I thank you also for the nice little books you so kindly forwarded to him. I mean to put them in his chest when he starts on his next voyage—when and where, we do not know yet. May it be his fortune to meet with such good friends as you have proved, in times of need."

"PONTYPOOL, *June* 10, 1875.

"Now that we have again parted with our dear boy, I wish to thank you, and so does my husband, for the many acts of kindness rendered to him by you during his stay, as well as to Frank when he was at home. We beg to assure you that we deeply and gratefully appreciate your kind attention."

"FISHGUARD, *October* 26, 1875.

"I saw in the Gazette that *La Escocessa* was off Holyhead on Saturday. I should feel extremely obliged if you would kindly let me know if she has got up to Liverpool safely. We are very anxious, as

last night was such a stormy night. I always feel so thankful when the boys arrive in Liverpool after a voyage, as I know they are well cared for when they are with you."

"TWEEDMOUTH, *December* 3, 1875.

"I hope you will excuse the liberty of Norman's sister writing to you. I am going to ask a favour of you, which would be too much to ask of a stranger; but one who loved my brother can be no stranger to me. I opened your letter for papa this morning, but my parents have not seen it; I feel afraid to let them see it, kind and sympathising as it is. Their hopes have been raised this week, and I cannot, oh! I cannot bear to witness their fearful grief when hope is gone. . . . We were all so bound up in our precious Norman, and feel it almost too hard to give him up. We know, indeed, *if* he is gone, it is for some wise reason. The favour I would beg is this: will you, dear sir, who I know have prayed for our darling, tell me if you think he was brought into Christ's fold ere he left you? He wrote a letter just before sailing, which now we prize beyond everything. He said he 'hoped God would spare us all to meet again, and that we should see a great change for the better in him.' Dear boy, he had been thinking of little faults at home, which we could not think faults. I know

one of God's people will comfort one who is writing in deep sorrow, and longing for comfort on this point. It will comfort my parents, should they be forced to give up the hope we all yet cling to. I fear it will bring my father to the grave.

"*P.S.*—If you have heard bad tidings of the ship, please tell me; it is better than doubt."

It would be difficult to estimate the value to young sailors such as "Norman" of the pervading Christian influence of such a home as "Balfour House." It would be difficult to fathom the preciousness, to anxious or bereaved parents and relations, of the tidings and the sympathy which come back to them from such a home, in cases like that just cited. Were all our sailor-boys to be environed thus with loving Christian influence before they sail and after they return from sea, what untold benefits might be secured for themselves, for their families, and for the mercantile marine!

Instances are not wanting of spiritual good done in connection with the Apprentices' Home. A young sailor named Harold met, at San Francisco, with a Christian youth, whose acquaintance he made at the Home. The ships of the two young men lay side by side at San Francisco, and the two friends spent five

consecutive evenings in attending the meetings of Messrs. Moody and Sankey, then being held there, and with the most salutary effect. Soon after this, young Harold was killed by a fall from the mast, and his companion was able to tell his friend's parents of the faith he had in his Redeemer when they parted. The mourning father writes to Mr. Legge: "I earnestly prayed that our dear boy might be kept from the evil all around him: this I could pray for without reservation; and he has been kept, but not in our way." The tidings regarding this young sailor gave Mr. Balfour much joy, and all such incidents deepened his sense of the value of the Apprentices' Home.

Of course such efforts for the good of others, as were involved in the founding of the Apprentices' Home, cannot be made without reflex benefit to those who make them. The officers and men of the firm have been of excellent quality. It may be doubted if any shipowners in Liverpool or elsewhere have been better served than Messrs. Balfour, Williamson, & Co.

It could not be foreseen, when the Apprentices' Home was founded, that the capricious, or at least incalculable changes in trade should, within a short time, render it of little value to the firm which carried the plan into execution. But it so happens that the

requirements of business have taken the ships of the firm to the Continent, to London, to the Tyne, to the Bristol Channel, and elsewhere, while seldom guiding them to Liverpool; so that for the last two years none of them have come into this port. But happily the advantages which, during recent years they have failed to reap for their own young men, have fallen to the lot of others.

Though the conditions have somewhat altered in the lapse of years, this institution continues, under the admirable management of Mr. Legge, in whom Mr. Balfour justly reposed the greatest confidence. It now bears the name of "Balfour House," and continues to provide great advantages to the class for whom it was designed.

"Mr. Balfour," says Mr. Legge, "had the interest of apprentices very much at heart. He never paid us a visit without suggesting something which he thought would promote the comfort and happiness of the boys. It was characteristic of him to treat us, when he came to the Home, as if he were under an obligation to us for receiving him. Though a bedroom was always kept for his use, he invariably sent a messenger to inquire of Mrs. Legge if it would be quite convenient for him to use it."

Among the means employed for improving their

sailors may be mentioned a plan adopted by the firm. A system of bonuses, in addition to the regular wages, was established. Notices were posted in the forecastle intimating that where the character exhibited and the language employed warranted it, a "very good" conduct certificate would be given by the captain, carrying with it a reward at the end of the voyage. The system worked well at first, but, from various causes, it has of late become practically inoperative.

Instances were occurring all through his life of Mr. Balfour's concern about the personal welfare of sailors. In 1866 he went to Valparaiso in the S.S. *Panama*. In his memorandum-book, in which brief records of the voyage are contained, occurs the following:—"On board the *Panama* there are thirty-two sailors, firemen, and stokers, of whom only three possessed Bibles. One of them was a Roman Catholic. I distributed amongst them twenty-eight copies of the Scriptures and four religious books, as a memento of our voyage." Then follows a careful list of all the men, to which is appended a note of satisfaction that all of them now owned copies of the Word of God.

At a later period, when on a voyage, he records his observations in the forecastle, which to him was

perhaps the most attractive part of a vessel. "In the evening went with a friend to talk to the seamen in the forecastle; tried to encourage them to look to God for help, and pressed on them the need of self-help; counselled them to trust in the love of God, who has given His own Son to die for us individually. All very thankful for the little books we distributed. The men represented to us very respectfully the crowded state of the forecastle. They pointed out that the forecastle was not properly lined, and that the wet sometimes came down from the roof and sides, so that they could not keep dry, although they used all the sacks and canvas they could get. The forecastle had only one ventilator opening from the roof, and in bad weather, when it is closed, the air becomes so hot and bad that sleep is impossible. In hot weather the air is stifling. The men further represented the insecurity of the forecastle, which is the very foremost part of the ship, and is not separated by a bulkhead, from the bow. If the ship were to run into an iceberg, as the *Arizona* did, the consequences would be fatal. The men pointed out that there is only one stair, and that a narrow one, by which seamen, stokers, firemen, and others can get on deck, one at a time, and if an accident were to happen and confusion to occur, there would probably

be loss of life in attempting to crush up to the deck. I am sure the builders have committed a great oversight in neglecting to provide a proper and secure forecastle for the ——. I have the greatest difficulty myself, with regard to the building of ships in which our firm is interested, in securing that reasonable provision be made for the seamen. I always go to the forecastle of new ships, and take more care to inspect them, than I do to see to the arrangements of the cabins, as captains are well able, as a rule, to attend to the cabins."

All this information, as the note-book tells us, was communicated by Mr. Balfour to the chairman of the company concerned in a letter which closed thus: "I hope you will pardon my drawing your attention to the forecastle of the ——, as I am sure you would not be satisfied were you to examine it. I am the more anxious to bring this matter before you, as you are building new steamers, whose forecastle arrangements you can readily control."

Thus did Mr. Balfour's almost instinctive care for the interests of seamen find expression both as regards his own ships and the ships of others. His concern for the interests of the "men" slumbered not. Nor can it be doubted that it has communicated itself to others. If there is any class of our country-

men whose personal safety, whose reasonable comfort and welfare should specially be regarded by England, surely it is the seamen upon whom her commerce and her safety so largely depend. That these men, by whose perilous exertions wealth and prosperity are attained by many, should have anything less than justice, anything less than kindly consideration, was a thought utterly distasteful to the heart of Mr. Balfour. It was the desire of his soul to guard their interests, for in the matter of self-protection they are feeble; to shield them, for they are tempted; to elevate them, for they are depressed. Our best shipowners sympathise in such aims; but if sympathy were to pervade that class, and indeed all classes of citizens, and to embody itself in practical and operative endeavour, how beneficent a change might speedily be wrought in the condition of our British sailors!

The banishing of grog as an article of daily use from our ships has now become general, and has been of untold advantage to crews, passengers, and shipowners. Messrs. Balfour, Williamson, & Co. very early discerned the benefit of such a course and adopted it. This beneficent system is now also, to a certain extent, adopted in the Royal Navy, an allowance in lieu of strong drink being given to those who choose to avail themselves of it. This contrasts

favourably with the time when grog was regularly served out to the men twice a day.

It need scarcely be said that Mr. Balfour took the deepest interest in the Liverpool Sailors' Home. This large and excellent institution has for many years been under the careful and sympathetic superintendence of Mr. Hanmer. The Home is capable of accommodating more than three hundred men, and has rendered most valuable service to both sailors and shipowners. The instincts of his heart drew Mr. Balfour very much to that centre, and he was ready to do anything that lay in his power, for the welfare of its ever-changing inmates. The following brief statement from the pen of Mr. Hanmer will indicate the nature of Mr. Balfour's relations with the institution :—

"It seems to me twenty-seven or twenty-eight years ago, since a tall gentleman came into the service-room at the Sailors' Home one Sunday evening to worship. His devotion and earnestness drew my attention to him, and at the close of the service he came at once to me and asked if I was the secretary. Being answered in the affirmative, he introduced himself as Mr. Balfour, and expressed himself as highly pleased with the decorum and quiet attention of the seamen present. Then turning round,

he spoke a few words, in a gracious and winning way, to a number of the men. After walking up and down the great hall with me for a short time, he invited me to call at his office, and so bade me good night.

"From that day to his death, he was one of the most frequent visitors to the institution. I expected a visit every two or three weeks, and was not often disappointed. When he had visitors at his office or residence, he would often bring them with him. He became so familiar with the place, that though, with his unfailing thoughtfulness and kindness, he always asked for me on entering, and wished me, if possible, to accompany him through the Home, yet I had nothing to tell him that he did not know. On these occasions he *always* spoke kind words to the seamen, as they sat in the great hall and in the sitting-rooms. He and his firm were among the first to subscribe handsomely whenever there was need. He was a life-governor, though he did not see his way, owing to a multitude of other engagements, to accede to the oft-repeated request that he should become a member of committee.

"Many years ago, when it was proposed to form a Widows' Emigration Society, he entered warmly into the scheme, and became a liberal supporter of it.

When a group of five or six widows and their families were ready to sail for Canada, he asked for the use of a room in the Sailors' Home, where a farewell meeting might be held; and there, along with others, he addressed the emigrants in wise and affectionate terms.

"My daughter used to visit some of the mission-rooms for seamen and others, in which he was interested, to conduct the praise. She met with many deserving cases which needed assistance, and he supplied her liberally with the means, and urged her to apply to him whenever she required help."

It may be added, that when the Duke Street Home for Apprentices was in contemplation, Mr. Balfour went to Mr. Hanmer to assure him that there was no wish to do anything which could injuriously affect the Sailors' Home, which, indeed, was too firmly established to be in any danger. He consulted Mr. Hanmer as to methods and details.

The loss sustained by our sailors, owing to their being to a great extent deprived of the opportunity of public worship, weighed heavily on Mr. Balfour's heart. It became one of his cherished aims, as far as possible, to remove this disadvantage. Accordingly the paper, to which we have already made reference, delivered by him in the Social Science Congress in Liverpool in

1876, closed with the following words: "I cannot conclude this paper without expressing the hope, that my fellow-shipowners may join our firm, in requiring that religious worship on Sundays shall take place on board all their ships. It is impossible to overstate the injury and loss to seamen and boys, from their passing six or eight or ten months of an East Indian or Australian voyage, without being asked to join in the worship of Almighty God, or hearing His Word read or explained. This duty of holding a religious service on Sunday I trust may become, as stated a part of the discipline on board of merchant ships, as it has become on board of ships of Her Majesty's Navy."

Mr. Balfour's eager desire for the spiritual welfare of our seamen deepened as years rolled on. He held frequent conferences with a friend who was concerned about the same object as to the best means of awakening or deepening the interest of shipowners, captains, and others in this great work. The result was that he resolved to convene a meeting in St. George's Hall, Liverpool. Arrangements were made for a conversazione on a large and liberal scale, and some three thousand invitations were issued. The meeting was thoroughly representative of the great interests associated with shipping. Shipowners and

merchants, captains and officers, with a full complement of ladies, were gathered for social intercourse.

After tea, addresses were delivered by the Bishop of Liverpool, Miss Weston of Devonport, Captain Ward, the President of the Mercantile Marine Service Association, Mr. Christopher Bushell, Mr. Edward Lawrence, and others.

Towards the close of the meeting Mr. Balfour spoke to the following resolution—"That this meeting of shipowners, shipmasters, and others interested in the mercantile marine of Great Britain, respectfully suggests to all who have influence on board ships, that they encourage the practice of having divine service on their ships every Sunday, and on other suitable occasions, during voyages at sea, and when in foreign ports. It is also recommended that a Bethel flag be hoisted whenever service is being held; and this meeting hopes that an invitation may be given to other seamen by captains who fly the Bethel flag, and that the holding of religious services may become general on all British ships."

In supporting the resolution Mr. Balfour said—"What would be the effect upon us, if we were kept for six or eight months without worshipping God?

We might be expected to get as hard as iron; and if these men become so, who is to blame? I feel strongly that these things are too much neglected. I was engaging a ship-master not long ago, and having satisfied myself as to his professional capability, I asked, 'Are you accustomed to have worship on board your ships?' He said 'No.' 'Well,' I said, 'it is a very extraordinary thing. Did you have family worship at home, at your father's house?' The man was a Scotchman from Aberdeenshire, and he answered 'Yes.' 'And you have been all these years the captain of a ship, and have not had worship on board?' 'No,' he replied, 'I have not.' 'And how long have you been at sea, from beginning to end?' I inquired. He said, 'I have been twelve years at sea.' 'And you have not held or attended service all that time?' 'No.' I told that man, 'If you join this ship, service is to be conducted, as an act of discipline, while you hold the command.' What has been done in the Royal Navy, in establishing worship on Sundays, can be done in the mercantile navy, if shipowners and shipmasters would but take the matter in hand. I shall altogether fail in my purpose if I do not impress upon you the importance of service of some kind in your ships, the very first Sunday it is practicable."

The earnest pleading tones of Mr. Balfour as he advocated the spiritual interests of the sailor are still remembered, and the interest of the meeting deepened onward to the close. "Such a meeting," says Mr. Grylls, the secretary of the Mercantile Marine Service Association, "such a meeting, embracing all classes and all shades of opinion, could have been successfully convened only by a man of the large-hearted sympathies of Mr. Balfour, who thus gathered round him some of the leading citizens of Liverpool. Of the results of this and similar efforts it is not possible to speak definitely, or to gauge the influences for good then set in motion. But the direct effect upon the hearts of the many hundreds present, and the distribution of a full report of the meeting by thousands over land and sea, cannot fail to be far-reaching and eternal."

The spiritual refreshment of the sailor, through the Sunday service, when far off upon the sea, is sometimes doubtless the result of the stimulus given to effort in this direction, at the remarkable meeting above referred to.

A book of "Services for Seamen," including sermons by the late Rev. Robert Philip, D.D., of Maberley Chapel, London, the well-known friend of sailors, has been supplied. It contains suitable prayers for

use on shipboard, drawn up by well-known ministers of Liverpool and other places. Mr. Balfour took much interest in the issue of this volume, which has proved admirably adapted for its purpose, and which offers welcome help to many a captain, who, without its aid, might have felt embarrassed or remained silent.

CHAPTER VI.

FOOTSTEPS AMONG SEAMEN

—Continued.

"The sea hath spoken."—ISAIAH xxiii. 4.

"We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows."—LAMEN. v. 3.

"In Thee the fatherless findeth mercy."—HOSEA xiv. 3.

"And there was no more sea."—REV. xxi. 1.

CHAPTER VI.

FOOTSTEPS AMONG SEAMEN—Continued.

NO one interested in seamen can fail to extend his interest to their orphans. Sailors' lives are exposed to exceptional risks. Of our 200,000 British seamen, it is found that on the average, besides those whose deaths occur at home, more than 4000 annually die abroad, and of these, much more than a half perish by drowning. The returns from the Board of Trade show that in the sixteen years following the establishment of the Liverpool Seamen's Orphanage, no less than 66,667 sailors died in English ships abroad, of whom 40,551 were drowned. In what condition are their families left? We give the answer in the words of Canon Drummond Anderson, chaplain of the Liverpool Seamen's Orphanage, than whom few persons, if any, have more frequent contact with the families of sailors whose lives have been lost at sea. "His experience with regard to common sailors was, that whenever poor Jack died,

his family were left destitute. If there were any who were better off, or had anything to the fore for a dark and cloudy day, they did not come in his way. The cases with which he had to deal were those in which the loss of poor Jack was the loss of all the support of his family." *

Allowing for the circumstance that the chaplain's duties call for his presence at the most distressful cases, his avowal reveals a state of things among British common sailors, which should never have existed, and which surely will not be permitted to continue. That expression, "if there were any who were better off," opens up a field for melancholy reflection. That a large section of our fellow-citizens, subject to painful exposure, and incurring serious peril in their daily calling—men to whom all classes of the community are indebted every day of life—men on whose labours the fortunes of the shipowning and mercantile classes are built—that such men should make no provision for the future, should live literally from hand to mouth, and, when life is cut short, should, as a rule, leave their widows and children destitute, is a thought to touch and trouble the dullest heart. This state of matters cannot exist without something

* From speech at the annual meeting of the Seamen's Orphanage in 1875.

being wrong in the system in which our sailor-citizens have to take their part, something which our seaport communities would do well to search out, something for which the Church of Christ is not without grave responsibility. To diminish a little the desolation, and to soften a little the sorrow of the shipwrecked sailors' home, is but a small part of our duty. Destitution is not the uniform accompaniment of the bread-winner's death among toilers on the shore, why should it be so among toilers on the sea? This problem awaits solution. It demands the thought and effort of all good citizens. Who will arise and lead the way? A compulsory system of life-assurance has been suggested, and might be of material value, but the whole condition of our seafaring population needs to be raised, and far more than hitherto leavened with Christian influence. Much valuable work is now done through special missions for seamen, but if the inquiry were made how many of them are members of any of our churches, a most disappointing answer would be the result.

In the meantime an imperative duty is incumbent upon us. The children who, by a single sweep of the hungry sea, are deprived at once of father and of food, must be cared for. They are England's

orphans, and England must provide for them. One case out of hundreds which have come before the chaplain may be cited. He says: "I was sitting in my study reading one morning, when a visitor was shown in. It was a poor young woman with two little infants, twins, in her arms: she sat down in a chair and began to cry; and oh, how she cried! It was a sorrowful sight to see the pale wan face wet with tears. She had been decently brought up, and married a sailor who had gone on a long voyage. The children were born, and were maintained principally by his monthly money. 'Yesterday,' she said, 'I went down to the office, and was told there would be no money for me any more, for the news had just come that the ship was lost with all hands.' The widow and her children were at once assisted."

Perhaps we may best convey an idea of the kind of cases admitted to the Orphanage if we transcribe from the register of children in the institution those occurring in the girls' department under one letter, viz., W, taken almost at random.

West, Emily.—Father was engineer on board the *Laconia*, and died from pressure on the brain. Seven children dependent on the widow, who has since (with the infant,) died in childbirth.

Williams, Mary.—Father was chief mate on board the *Zephyr*, and died at sea of fever. Five children dependent on the widow.

Williams, Mary Ellen.—Father was a fireman on board the steam-tug *Tartar*, and was drowned. Six children dependent on the widow.

Wooley, Ellen.—Father was steward on board the *Palm*, and died of fever on the coast of Africa. Three children dependent on the widow.

Wylie, Jane.—Father was chief engineer on board the S.S. *Virago*, and died at sea of apoplexy. Five children dependent on the widow.

In the case of those who are acquainted with the homes of the poor, imagination will have no hard task in picturing the desolation and dismay which fill such households as those above referred to. A family is living in quietness and modest comfort, when suddenly the brief dark message comes, "Lost at sea." The light of the house has gone out, the bread-winner wins bread no more, and the wan widow and her cheerless children have, unprovided and unprepared, to face the cold world alone, and to fight their way through, as best they may.

Mr. Balfour was one of those who could not contemplate scenes like these without his whole nature being moved. The thought of alleviating sorrow so

deep, and of making such provision as the sad circumstances would permit, for the mourning and the destitute, laid firm hold upon his head and heart. To provide for the sailor's orphans, and to do it on a scale worthy of the great port of Liverpool, was his consuming desire. He was all aglow with this benevolent purpose when first it took tangible form. It was inspiring to meet him and to hear his fervent words. No business aim, no prospect of advantage for himself, ever took possession of him as this object did. He felt, and spoke as if his friends *must* sympathise with the seamen's orphans, and be ready to fling themselves into the scheme with an enthusiasm like his own. It was almost impossible to escape the contagion of compassion like his. Embers of mercy, in some about him, were fanned into a flame. He loved to keep in the background, if only instruments were found and the work was done. Those most intimately acquainted with the history of the Orphanage know best, to how large an extent its inception and success were due to his burning zeal and unflagging perseverance.

He had the joy of seeing men raised up able and willing to carry through this noble enterprise, men like Mr. Ralph Brocklebank, the president, whose mind and purse were at the service of the institution,

and Mr. James Beazley, the honorary treasurer and chairman of the executive committee, who flung himself with all the energy of his warm heart into the scheme, not to mention a host of fellow-workers.

At an early stage the project was well-nigh extinguished. "I remember," says his partner, "the anxiety and trouble on his countenance when he told me that, by the narrowest chance, the idea was not rejected by the meeting. It was pointed out by some, that the town abounded with benevolent institutions; feelings were expressed that another for the orphans of seamen could not be maintained. It was with difficulty he got the meeting adjourned, without there and then coming to an adverse decision. He carefully prepared himself, with the aid of Mr. Hanmer of the Sailors' Home and others, for the adjourned meeting; and I remember with what joyous and triumphant tones he told me that in the end, it had been resolved to go on with the enterprise."

When the stately building, which was to be the home of the fatherless, was approaching completion, Mr. Balfour claimed the privilege of placing a tablet over the porch, bearing the inscription which so strikingly tells the story of the Orphanage, "In Thee the fatherless findeth mercy."

When it was completed and tenanted, Mr. Balfour would often spend the night at the home of the present writer, not distant from the institution, and would be off about seven in the morning to refresh himself, before breakfast, with a sight of the healthy and happy faces of the children, to speak to them a word of counsel, and to leave behind him fresh encouragement with chaplain, matron, and all who cared for the orphans. On such occasions he would return to the house radiant with thankfulness and joy, and prepared to start on the duties of a day, which was to be filled with words and works of thoughtful kindness.

One who had the best opportunities of knowing Mr. Balfour's ways in the Orphanage writes to us: "When he was on the committee investigating applications for help, often and often, as the widow turned away to leave the room with her children, have I seen him slip a gold coin into her hand." "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me, and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me, because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him: the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."

Mr. Balfour was a strong advocate for supple-

menting the aid given within the institution by a system of relief, in the homes of deceased sailors, which are found scattered through every district of Liverpool. Thus, for example, he pleaded at one of the annual meetings: "If it were necessary, I could convince the meeting that we require, in conducting this institution successfully, to attend both to cases of outdoor and cases of indoor relief. We meet with such an instance as this: a respectable Christian widow, the mother of a family, applies to us for relief. She would prefer to train her own children herself, and does not want to give them up to us. Surely, for such a reason as strong maternal affection, a poor woman such as this ought not to be deprived of the benefits of our institution. Such is the mind of the committee, and I believe that it will be the mind of the general community. . . . I entreat you, on behalf of myself and colleagues of the committee, not to put us in the position of being a responsible executive, without ample funds being given us to deal adequately, by means of outdoor and indoor relief, with this refuge of the orphan and the widow. Oh, the pain! I declare it is heart-breaking to sit and hear the applications of those widows. I have pitied the chairman again and again in going through these cases, knowing all their sadness without being able

adequately to relieve it. . . . We have only to do our duty, and I know we shall not be the poorer, but shall have the blessing of God on what we give and what we have. Oh, don't let us stint the widow and orphan in this community, I do beseech you." Powerful was the pleading of this earnest man, backed as it was by open-handed generosity on his own part.

One advantage, springing from this noble institution, is that it has called forth miscellaneous and widespread liberality. Scarcely an Atlantic steamer leaves or returns to Liverpool, without the claims of the Orphanage being brought before the passengers on Sunday, or on some other suitable occasion. Hearts, grateful for God's goodness in granting a safe passage, go forth in ready sympathy with the orphans whose fathers have perished on the melancholy main. Commanders and officers of the vessels willingly give prominence to this subject. Englishmen, Americans, and foreigners from many lands respond, by casting their thank-offerings into the treasury of the institution. The pilots of Liverpool, the employés of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, take a willing part in the annual contribution. Thus, while rivulets of kindness from many different quarters concentrate themselves upon the Orphanage, multitudes of hearts are the better for having had tenderness stirred

within them, by the tale of sorrow that comes from the drowned sailor's child. To stimulate this floating fountain of beneficence was the earnest aim of Mr. Balfour.

The Orphanage has grown to goodly proportions. On the 1st of July 1887 there were 360 in the institution, and 372 on the outdoor list. The cost of the former for food, clothing, and education is £15 per head per annum, and of the latter, or outdoor class, £8 per head per annum. Since its first establishment 2660 children have been cared for in one or other of these ways.

At the age of fourteen the boys are sent out to fight their way in the world, some to sea, some to trades, some to offices. It is a valuable testimony to the thoroughness of their instruction and the excellence of their training, that railway companies and great employers of labour are always ready to take the Orphanage boys. The girls are retained, if their mothers desire it, till they attain the age of fifteen. The last year is devoted mainly to training in all branches of household work. So equipped, the girls become useful in their own homes, or find employment as domestic servants, &c. Results like these filled the warm and tender heart of Mr. Balfour with thankfulness and joy.

The Church of Christ, in its various branches, was all too slow in awaking to a sense of its duty to seamen, and to the conviction that special agencies were required, to meet the necessities of their case. The character and habits of our sailors not only seriously affect their own condition, but influence the most distant lands of earth to which they sail. The entrance of God's Word in distant and in heathen lands is helped or hindered by their conduct. A number of years ago the Colonial Bishops were asked to give their opinion as to the influence of British seamen on the inhabitants of the ports they visited. They pronounced a unanimous judgment, "That the influence of British seamen was undoubtedly prejudicial to the people, and their conduct a sad obstacle to the reception of the gospel."

The Church of Christ has been awaking to her duty, and matters are improving. Sailors, like winged seed, are wafted from England to many a distant shore. Were they, speaking generally, to carry our good report, and not our evil report, were they to be won from the side of evil to the side of truth and righteousness, who can estimate the blessed effect which would be produced in colonial lands, and in fields of missionary effort among the heathen?

For the sake of the sailor, for the sake of England,

and for the sake of the world, the cry is loud to make direct and sustained efforts for the spiritual welfare of seamen. To win them to the Saviour, and at the same time to help them toward all goodness, comfort, and well-being, is what is needed. Among the societies which aim at this great result, there is one —the Mersey Mission to Seamen—with which Mr. Balfour was closely associated from its origin in 1857 till his death. For many years he acted as Honorary Secretary. He attended its committee meetings with unfailing assiduity, and by the warmth of his enthusiasm he won for it many a friend and supporter. On Sunday afternoons and week-day evenings, his visits were welcome alike to seamen and to Christian workers. At Christmas-tide, when the sailors assembled at tea or gathered round a Christmas-tree, he would give utterance to fervid heart-stirring addresses which are not forgotten.

In addition to the liberal pecuniary support given by his firm to this Society, Mr. Balfour was personally a large contributor to special branches of the work. For many years he defrayed the entire cost of a mission-room to seamen at the north end of the town. He also paid the salary of a colporteur to circulate the Scriptures among seamen.

The Society has extended its work to Birkenhead,

Garston, Ellesmere Port, and Runcorn. It promotes wholesome reading for the men, carries on Temperance effort, aims at the elevation of the sailor in many ways, material and spiritual. In all of these spheres of agency Mr. Balfour took the deepest interest.

Among the many objects contemplated by this Society, there was one on which he specially set his heart. It is thus referred to by Mr. Charles J. Bushell, the chairman of committee. "The handsome and commodious Seamen's Institute in Hanover Street may be said to owe its existence to Mr. Balfour's munificence. For some years the committee had been vainly seeking for a site on which to erect a suitable building. When the Corporation carried out their improvements in Paradise Street and Hanover Street, which necessitated the pulling down of a number of public-houses and beer-houses, an eligible site near the Sailors' Home was advertised for sale by public auction. Mr. Balfour, with his wonted ardour and enthusiasm, made up his mind that this site *must* be bought. Whatever its cost, he offered to guarantee the amount, not for a moment lacking the faith that the requisite funds would be forthcoming.

"The site accordingly was purchased for £7050. The half of the site sufficing for the Institute, the

other half was sold to the British Workman Public-House Company for the erection of a 'Cocoa Room.' Funds for the half of the site which was retained were ere long subscribed, Mr. Balfour himself contributing £500 in addition to a like sum from his firm. On this piece of land was erected a beautiful building, well adapted for the important work to be carried on therein, at a total cost of £8580. 'He being dead yet speaketh.' For countless years, as sailors meet for prayer, praise, and social converse, will the beneficent work commenced in his lifetime fructify and increase."

The institute was opened on the 10th December 1885, under the presidency of the Mayor,—the Bishop of Liverpool, Mr. Balfour himself and others taking part on the important occasion.

The work which was thus accomplished was one after Mr. Balfour's own heart. There was a double blessing in it. It was the removal of a trap to catch poor "Jack" for his destruction, and the substitution of a house of shelter, of social fellowship, of prayer, to draw him upward for his deliverance. This was at one blow to destroy the works of the devil, and to replace them by works on which the Master smiles. It did one good to meet Mr. Balfour at this time, and to hear him on this topic. His thankfulness and

hopefulness were unbounded. A vast gin-palace demolished and its place occupied by the twin agencies of a Seaman's Institute and a "Cocoa Room!" It seemed to him a symbol of the dawn of better days for seamen and for his beloved Liverpool; it pointed, in his sanguine view, to the triumph of Christianity and humanity over selfishness and rapacity. On these themes, the outpourings of his grateful and rejoicing heart did not fail to refresh the spirits of the friends among whom he moved. It was easy to discern that a boon to the people was a blessing to himself.

There is in Liverpool an older Society which seeks the good of seamen. It is "The Seamen's Friend Society," and was established so far back as 1820. Though not so engrossingly employed in the work of this Society, Mr. Balfour was one of its committee, and was deeply interested in all its concerns. When times of difficulty occurred especially, he was ever ready both to plead and to give in its behalf. The Mersey Mission is mainly supported by the Church of England; the Seamen's Friend Society mainly by Nonconformists. But wherever the welfare of the sailor was earnestly and faithfully promoted, Mr. Balfour's heart, hand, and purse were open.

Among the agencies which are brought into play

by the Seamen's Friend Society is one, long actively employed, which called forth the fullest sympathy of Mr. Balfour. A library of thirty books, deposited in a strong box, is supplied, as far as possible, to every captain leaving Liverpool who desires to receive it. The effect is found to be excellent. Hours which otherwise would have been unoccupied, and therefore likely to be productive of evil, are in many cases pleasantly and usefully employed. Where the floating libraries are valued, they are sometimes exchanged by passing vessels in mid-ocean, and so fresh reading is secured. A number of libraries are every year lost at sea, often, alas! together with the poor sailors, who used to while away their leisure-time in the pleasant company of the books.

Numbers of useful magazines, like the *Leisure Hour*, *Sunday at Home*, &c., are put by considerate friends at the disposal of the committee. These are given to sailors as they embark, and often keep their minds helpfully employed, in the spare time which fine weather brings at sea. The value of such literature cannot easily be realised by dwellers in cities, where bookshops and free libraries are found. The barren ocean affords no such mental food to the unfortunate reader who has sailed on a long voyage, without a book. On one occasion a sailor called at

the "South Bethel" to ask the chief agent of the Society to hear him his lesson, as he had been trying to improve himself, while at sea, in reading and committing to memory. Mr. Wilkie willingly complied, but was taken aback to find that his "lesson" consisted of the first page of the *Liverpool Mercury*, a broad sheet of advertisements, which, in the absence of all other literature, the diligent Tar had learnt by heart. The cultivation of a taste for reading, and the supply of wholesome material, are most worthy aims of the Society.

Various means and methods are employed, but the spiritual and moral elevation of the sailor is the object supremely kept in view. The room known as "The Forecastle," which has happily been secured close to the Sailors' Home, and therefore in the very centre of the haunts of the men, is greatly valued. There, newspapers and magazines may be read; there, letters may be written, by or for the sailors, to distant friends; and there, daily at noon, a brief and lively prayer-meeting is held, and the gospel invitation is proclaimed. Many a message of gratitude and praise has come back from the ends of the earth, for the glad tidings heard and the first step in repentance and amendment taken in "The Forecastle." In that room Mr. Balfour's was a familiar voice.

The agents of this Society bear witness to the improvement which is manifested around the Sailors' Home, since a number of public-houses in the district have been improved out of existence. A former publican of that neighbourhood, speaking of one of the missionaries, said, "That man has ruined my trade, but thank God, he has saved my soul." And now the rescued publican is spreading the glad tidings which once he despised.

Another Society contemplating the good of British and foreign sailors and emigrants, as well as foreigners of all kinds who choose to avail themselves of its help, owed much in its origin and growth, to the liberal support and kindly counsel of Mr. Balfour. It is called "The Stranger's Rest," and supplements the efforts of the Associations already described. A grateful shelter is provided for strangers, with reading and writing room. Christian meetings for the reading and the explanation of Scripture are held in the English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Finnish, Norse, and other languages. The work is largely carried on by Christian ladies, to whom the sailor invariably gives ready and respectful hearing. In a quiet, unobtrusive way much good has been done, wanderers have been brought back to the fold, sinners have been converted, prodigals have been restored to sorrowing parents,

good seed has been sown in hearts which have carried it to all lands. We may add that Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Radcliffe throw their zeal and their energies into this excellent movement.

There is yet a great work before us, to be prosecuted on the same lines. There are great deliverances to be wrought out for our city and our sailors. We need only more work, more prayer, and more faith. Then shall we see the hopes, by many thought illusory, of men like Mr. Balfour, converted into glad realities.

CHAPTER VII.

COUNCIL OF EDUCATION.

"I call a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, liberally, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war."—MILTON.

"A man that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time; but that happeneth rarely."—BACON.

CHAPTER VII.

COUNCIL OF EDUCATION.

BETWEEN the late Mr. Christopher Bushell and Mr. Balfour a friendship sprang up of singular depth and intensity—a friendship which gained a firmer hold of both, year by year, till interrupted by death. Two noble men could scarcely have been found more unlike one another; and to the bystander it might have seemed most improbable that, between them, affection profound and tender should have existed. Yet so it was. The calm judicial mind of Mr. Bushell, naturally clothing its utterances in dignity and stateliness, and the eager impetuous soul of Mr. Balfour, rushing into utterance and action in the form that came most readily to him, had a singular affinity for one another. We have heard each speak of the other in terms of unmeasured admiration and affection, and each attribute to the other the main merit of beneficent works in which they were jointly engaged.

We cannot forget our meeting with Mr. Bushell on

the way to the beautiful but desolated home of Mount Alyn, on the day on which Mr. Balfour fell asleep. Mr. Bushell's grief flowed from a fountain that was deep indeed. He had lost a brother and more than a brother, a man whose burning enthusiasm and conquering faith and princely munificence had taken possession of his heart. Alas! that so soon, in the midst of noble and most fruitful work, Mr. Bushell too should have been taken from us, gently translated to a higher sphere of action. Rarely favoured is the city which has two such men to lose.

Not long before his own death, Mr. Bushell supplied us with the following notes and extracts from Mr. Balfour's letters to him, from which something of the character of both men will appear. There are a few references in them which were supplied to us for guidance, and which might not perhaps have been allowed to remain if Mr. Bushell had continued with us; but now that he is gone from us, there is no reason for suppressing them. We look on these memoranda about such a man, from such a man, with a certain feeling of sacredness, and prefer to present them substantially as they were received. They relate mainly, but not exclusively, to the Council of Education, which has not only done an excellent work for Liverpool, but has set a noble example before all the country. Of

this movement Mr. Bushell was—as by his qualities of head and heart he was admirably fitted to be—the soul and centre. With his quick perception of anything that was destined to bless the community, Mr. Balfour threw into this cause both heart and treasure. When they read these extracts, some fellow-citizens will recall the tall figures of these two departed friends, as they were often seen together, in the prosecution of schemes in which they took a common interest; the one with his erect and noble form, and finely chiselled features, calm and self-restrained, the other with his bending, mobile, eager figure, his outstretched hand, and ever-varying features—heaven-made friends, whose strangely differing powers and natures were absorbed in the effort to bless their city and their native land.

Mr. Balfour became a member of the Liverpool Council of Education at the time of its formation in 1874, and continued to be an active member of the executive committee until the time of his death. A few extracts from several letters written to Mr. Bushell, the president of the Council, by Mr. Balfour during a period of illness, and while absent from home on the Continent, will show the deep interest which he took in this work, and the thoughtful consideration

which he gave to its details. These extracts also illustrate the estimation in which Mr. Balfour held many other good works in Liverpool, and the interest which he took in them. His pecuniary contributions to the work of the Council, as to many other local religious and philanthropic institutions, were simply munificent, and wherever there was need, his heart and hand were always open. Without Mr. Balfour's pecuniary help in the beginning of its work, the Council of Education could scarcely have reached the degree of efficiency and usefulness which it has been permitted to attain.

The following is taken from the Report of the Council of Education for 1877–78 :—

"ARCACHON, NEAR BORDEAUX, *24th October* 1877.

"MY DEAR MR. BUSHELL,—It has been a source of sincere congratulation and comfort to me, that the scholarships founded by the Council of Education for the boys of the Liverpool elementary schools have proved such a very great success. Not only do they afford to the boys who gain them, an opportunity for improving their position in life, but it is plain that they give a general stimulus to educational work throughout the town. I consider the conditions on which the scholarships are granted to be

most excellent, and that their beneficial action has now been thoroughly tested and proved.

"Believing as I do that the town at large would be prejudiced if these scholarships were by any chance now to fail, I beg to ask your kind consideration of some scheme whereby they can be perpetuated in the future, irrespective of the annual contributions received by the Council.

"If you were to determine to raise a principal sum, the interest of which would serve for the maintenance of these scholarships, I feel sure that not only would their permanence, so far as it is in our power, be thereby established, but the Council would, with the greater ease, be able to prosecute other departments of the work that lies before them.

"To such a fund, should you decide to raise it, I desire to contribute; and anticipating that the suggestion I venture to make may commend itself to your judgment, I beg to enclose a cheque for £1000 to the fund, asking you will please to receive it as 'A thank-offering.' Should you deem it better that my own name should appear, you can use it. With very kind regards, I remain, my dear Mr. Bushell, yours very sincerely, A. BALFOUR."

Writing to the President of the Liverpool Council

of Education, in reply to an acknowledgment of the letter just quoted, Mr. Balfour, under the date of Arcachon, 5th December 1877, says :—

"I am certain that benefit is to be derived from what is now being done, in ways that cannot now be foreseen. A dignity is given to the subject of education such as was never given before, and the subject is at last being treated as of national importance, and not left to be a bone of contention to the religious denominations."

In a letter to Mr. Bushell, dated 1st January 1878, and written from Arcachon, Mr. Balfour says :—

"I told my bookseller to send you a copy of Archdeacon Hare's book 'The Victory of Faith,' of which we have spoken together, and which I hope you have received. The fourth sermon I specially commend to your notice. One can imagine the tall, aged scholar and preacher delivering it to the lads sitting at his feet, and commending to heart and judgment, with all the persuasiveness in his power, the heavenly truths he was commissioned to declare.

"I consider the condition of the town of Liverpool already furnishes an extraordinary instance of the conquering power of faith. Within the past three or four years several new enterprises have been begun in faith amongst us, and what are we now

permitted to see? Take the work of the Council of Education. I have already told you the deep impression made on my mind, by the fact that the attendance of children at our elementary schools has increased within the past three years by nearly ten thousand children, a result largely due to the work of the Council. Each of these children has a history before it, which is certain to be affected *for good* by this work. Let us continue this work in faith, and who can tell the blessing it may bring. We are not straitened in God; do not let us straiten ourselves.

"The recent development of work amongst seamen is bringing about spiritual changes that are a perfect marvel. Think of an attendance of some eighty men often at the meetings for prayer at 2 P.M., and this in the face of all the temptations abounding, at Price Street. There is now a Mission-Room for foreign seamen, and it has become so overcrowded as to need enlargement. The Seamen's Orphanage is of older origin, but this year's report will only be the eighth, and yet its success is wonderful, as you can judge from the enclosed letter, which I hope I may, without breach of confidence, submit to your own eye.

"The work amongst young men is most hopeful, and if these are influenced for good, what hopes may we not indulge in for the future!

"And the remaining subject for special gratitude is the success of these cocoa-rooms, which are flourishing, and are the strongest teetotal fact that exists in our country. I feel certain their popularity furnishes a demonstration, that where reasonable provision is made for the wants of working-men, the public-house is passed by. What a reflection they cause on the reasonings and procedure of our magistrates! The success of these cocoa-rooms is completely to overthrow the false theories that have done such mischief, and I am sure will do good far beyond the limits of our own neighbourhood.

"The educational and other results I have now glanced at are unattainable by any merely human power. The Master Himself has brought them about by His own servants, whose work He has indeed greatly blessed. You must not wonder at my occupying your time by these reflections, for thoughts of the marvellous progress of His work in Liverpool afford me more comfort and rejoicing than the perusal of any poem or the reading of any novel!"

Referring to the demonstration on the delivery of the scholarships and prizes of the Council of Education in January 1878, on which occasion an address was delivered by the Right Honourable Dr. Lyon Playfair, Mr. Balfour writes:—

"The defined objects of the Council are now fairly before the public, and we may hope, as time goes on, will become more and more understood. Deficiencies are now recognised in our system of elementary education, and an honest attempt is made to meet them, instead of shutting our eyes to them or passing them by. Well might Dean Howson say that the proceedings of the Council are likely to be for good, far beyond our own locality. It would really seem that a large experiment is being initiated by the Council, which may ultimately affect for good the whole nation. Oh, what need for Divine help and wisdom in the direction of its affairs!

"Our net must be cast wider and wider, so as to enclose many big fish that now swim at large in deep water. One word more about this collecting of money. Remember that if you ask any one for his money, you are doing him an honour thereby. Besides that, if you induce men to give what they can properly spare to this good object, a positive benefit to themselves will ensue. The words of the Apostle are (Eph. vi. 8), 'Knowing that whatsoever good thing *any man* doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.' And I would also say there is plenty of loose money in Liverpool for all Christian requirements. I received a somewhat re-

markable letter the other day from our dear friend Mr. ——. He writes:—

"'We have great reason to be thankful for many things, but have much work yet to do. There is much land yet to be possessed. I have great joy in helping in every good work. I cannot give so much labour as some from want of strength and time, but God has prospered my business much of late, and I can heartily help with money when needed, and with my prayers. God's claim is on every man, *according to his several ability*, and I am anxious the coming year may be the most fruitful in His service.'

"So there are some amongst us, even now, who regard themselves as His stewards, and we must look forward to the time when all are so to regard themselves.

"My heart sang for joy yesterday when we heard the news that there was peace. The tidings came just as we were going into the little new church that was about to be opened for the first time. I wish there had been an organ, and that Handel's music, 'Smiling Peace,' could have been played. What a relief that the fearful carnage, suffering, and sorrow of these battlefields has ceased."

Those who visited him, about that time, cannot

forget the intense emphasis with which, at family worship, he used to pray—"Scatter Thou the people that delight in war."

Mr. Balfour, in a letter dated Pau, 6th March 1878, characteristically remarks :—

"Moral forces are now at work in our town in a manner unparalleled in its history since I have known it, and my heart dances with joy as I find that the honest truth is more and more plainly announced and acted on. Just as we get Bible truth identified with elementary education, with temperance, with commercial business, and with politics, so shall we, as individuals and as a nation, become prosperous and happy. One has only to come to this country and see the industry, and thrift, and temperance, and comfort of the peasantry, to be made aware how greatly we need improvement and reform in our national laws, and in our personal thoughts and purposes at home."

In the same letter, Mr. Balfour, speaking of the evil results of drunkenness and its attendant vice and poverty, asks—

"Where are we to turn for the remedy of all this? To the efforts of Christian men, who are seeking by God's blessing to extend His Kingdom. To Christian men, labouring for a Christian, and not a party

purpose, do I turn, and thank God with assured hope that the time of deliverance is drawing nigh."

Referring again to the work of the Council of Education, and its method of influencing the pupils, as far as possible, by inducement with reward rather than compulsion under penalty, the writer continues :—

"I like your unit of 420 punctual attendances extremely. Everybody can understand this, and simplicity is an immense thing to a child. Also that 'Excelsior' should ring in the pupil's mind, from the beginning to the end of his school course, regarding this matter of punctuality. I quite believe that this new principle, of acknowledging and rewarding punctual attendance at school, will by and by be adopted by Government. I congratulate you with my whole heart, on having been able to embody the principle in a scheme so practical and comprehensive as that just issued. It touches the weak points of our educational system, and strengthens and improves it all round. I am glad it is contemplated to have a field-day at Midsummer for the children. I believe that the stimulus, given by the hope of passing over the platform of St. George's Hall, would operate as strongly on a child's mind as any reward that could be proposed. Such a day in Liverpool will be like the Crystal Palace day in London, when the Bibles

have to be distributed—a red-letter day for the children and for their parents. What a change all this is to make in the condition of our system of elementary education—the attention of the town strongly concentrated on it, and the sympathy of all classes drawn to it. No doubt, as you say, the requisite pecuniary support will also be forthcoming. I am very glad you are able to announce so excellent a beginning towards the 'Endowment Fund for the Scholarships of the Liverpool Council of Education,' the whole sum required for which I trust you may be able in due course to announce has been contributed."

Reverting to other topics, Mr. Balfour writes:—

"The opinion is gathering strength in my mind that Englishmen rapidly deteriorate abroad, and that they must return home from time to time, else they degenerate—such a butterfly life as a number of the English people here get into!

"Thank you for telling me about the Mersey Mission meeting, which I rejoice was so successful. What a good thing that the Bishop should be so loyal to this Society, and so regularly occupy the chair, although, no doubt, he has large claims on his time. I am very glad you kindly took in hand the difficult duty of representing to Mr. ——— the views and feelings of Nonconformist friends, at the proposal of virtually

making the Seamen's Orphanage into a Church of England institution. It has been Christian and undenominational, as far as possible, in its character hitherto, and so it ought certainly to remain. I now feel strong hopes that a satisfactory settlement of the difficulty will be come to."

Writing from the Engadine in August 1880, Mr. Balfour says :—

"We are fast approaching the time when the Council of Education will have completed its preparatory work, towards securing the attendance and punctuality of children at our elementary schools, and providing endowments for our scholarships. The greatest work remains to be undertaken, namely, that of improving the training of our pupil-teachers. We are to take the first step in this by opening the institution in Sandon Terrace. How would it answer that it should be managed by a committee, to consist of certain members of the Council of Education and of certain other friends? While we are at first to provide for the training of female pupil-teachers, yet let us hope we shall be encouraged ere long to undertake an institution for male pupil-teachers."

It may be mentioned that the School Board having established a college for the supplementary training and instruction of their pupil-teachers, the Council

deemed it desirable that similar advantages should be conferred upon the pupil-teachers of the voluntary schools. Towards this object Mr. Balfour became at once a most generous contributor, and during a considerable period of great pecuniary need, the latter college was maintained at his sole expense.

He was very strong in his conviction that the Bible should be read in all elementary schools, and held that education was not worthy of the name, which did not take cognisance of the moral and religious side of a child's nature. Hence he was intensely desirous, that young teachers and pupil-teachers should be under moral influences of the most elevating kind, while their intellectual training was in progress. He believed, with Hugh Miller, that "education without religion is the world's expedient for converting farthings into guineas by scouring."

It need scarcely be added that when University College, Liverpool, was projected and commenced, Mr. Balfour took up the matter with enthusiasm, and was one of its thoughtful and munificent benefactors. The University was opened in 1882, its first Principal being Mr. G. H. Rendall, M.A., Trinity College, Cambridge, and its success from the commencement has demonstrated its necessity, and has amply justified the most sanguine anticipations of its founders.





MOUNT ALYN



CHAPTER VIII.

MOUNT ALYN: HOME LIFE.

"A glance of heaven to see
To none on earth is given;
And yet a happy family
Is but an earlier heaven."—JOHN BOWRING.

"To Adam, Paradise was home. To the good among his descendants, home is Paradise."—HARE.

"Send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared."—NEH. viii. 10.

CHAPTER VIII.

MOUNT ALYN: HOME LIFE.

THE intensity of the life, lived by Mr. Balfour in Liverpool, could not fail to put his mental and physical energies under severe strain. We have sometimes found that a walk with him, through the streets of the city, gave curious evidence of the richness of his nature and the manifoldness of his interests. Meeting a benevolent shipowner, he would descant upon the claims and excellences of the Seamen's Orphanage, as though the orphans were the great object for which he lived; meeting a town-councillor, he would open fire upon some abuse that he was endeavouring to expose and explode, with an energy that was at times tremendous; meeting a citizen on his return from the noon prayer-meeting, he would utter fervent thanksgiving to God that all that was being attempted for the good of Liverpool was guarded and blessed by the prayers of the Lord's people, and would pour out his soul on

the need of heavenly help as the basis of all successful endeavour; meeting another whose heart was towards Temperance reform, he would rush into the heart of that subject, descanting on corner-men and corner-houses, and magisterial duties and licensing boards elected *ad hoc*, with a zeal and emphasis that might have made one suppose that he thought by day and dreamt by night of nothing else. Each man he met might have come to the same conclusion, and have gone away with zeal kindled anew on his own subject. Under the witchery of his blue "glittering eye," like Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, he held each fast till he had delivered his soul. We have gone home from such a walk, with the conviction that torch after torch had been lighted or rekindled, by the fire of that intense nature. All causes were his that worked for the good of his beloved city; all who worked for any of these causes were his friends. And from the warmth of his gratitude to any one who was manfully struggling to right a wrong or to minister to the public well-being, one would have supposed that a personal obligation had been conferred on him, as well as a benefit secured for the community.

It was a blessed but an exhausting life to him. The sun is ever giving out his rays without perceptible diminution of his heat and light; but with

us it is not so. Mr. Balfour began to feel a desire to combine the repose of the country with the activity of the town. He thought he might thus husband his strength, for more effective use among the busy scenes he loved so well.

In 1869 an opportunity occurred for purchasing a retreat such as he desired. The beauty of the scenery around Mount Alyn and its accessibility to Liverpool were great attractions to him It lies among the hills of Denbighshire, a few miles beyond Chester. The house is commodious and convenient but unpretentious. It stands on a wooded slope, with an ample park before it, clothed with splendid old trees, and skirted at the bottom by the pretty little River Alyn, on its way to mingle with the waters of the Dee. The terraced walks around the house command a lovely view of the immediate valley, marked on the opposite side by the abrupt bank known as "The Roft," while beyond opens the rich and fertile Vale Royal, with the towers of old Chester rising grandly in the distance.

It is a choice spot, and was from this time to be the home of the Balfour family. Mr. Balfour was somewhat jealous over himself about the acquisition of this beautiful property. This state of mind is indicated by a conversation between him and his

friend Mr. John Fair, whom he invited to go over it with him, after its purchase, but before its occupation. Mr. Fair spoke of the loveliness of the spot, and said he supposed, after so many years of hard work, he would retire from the cares of business and the bustle of Liverpool, and enjoy the pleasures of a country-gentleman's life. "I shall never forget," says Mr. Fair, "the serious, almost solemn way in which he replied to my remark, to the effect that were there any chance, from his having selected this beautiful place for his home, of its drawing him away from Liverpool, and the work in which he was engaged in behalf of that city, he would part with it at once without a pang."

It was with him a constant subject of regret, not to say indignation, sometimes expressed in language more plain than pleasant, that many who made their fortunes in Liverpool spent them elsewhere, retiring to a distance, and doing perhaps little or nothing for the community to which they owed so much. With him this was impossible. He loved Liverpool with a singular earnestness and unchangeableness of affection. It sometimes struck his friends that his love for it resembled a larger family affection. He was irresistibly drawn to any one, rich or poor, who was honestly endeavouring to benefit his city in its

material, but especially in its moral and spiritual interests; and upon any one who, he thought, might render useful service in this work, he did not fail to exert the strange magnetic influence of his mind and eye, as, with bending figure and taper fingers outstretched, he urged his plea with the earnest knightly grace which has left its unique and indelible picture stamped on the memory of those who witnessed it.

Liverpool was graven on his heart. One was reminded of the Psalmist's love for the Holy City when he sang, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." And so it came that the removal of his residence to North Wales led to no slackening of his efforts in behalf of his beloved city; if possible, the reverse. His hope was, by economy of strength, to have it more in his power to help its people.

Often might he be found, in the early morning before breakfast, in his quiet library, conducting varied correspondence, or drafting memorials or resolutions for the benefit of a wide circle, of which, for him, Liverpool was the centre of intensity and impulse. The bent of his thoughts made itself apparent when, after such early occupation, his family gathered around the family altar. When, with a loved child upon his knee, he had read a portion of

God's Word with the emphatic realism, and the absorbed and startling pauses, which marked his utterance, he bowed his knee in prayer, there followed, oftentimes, a flood of pleading, plaintive supplication for "that great community;" for the sinning and the sorrowing; for those that suffered wrong and those that did the wrong; and for all who loved and sought the welfare of the people. All was confided to his God. And so, with both hands filled with busy practical work, his waiting eyes were ever toward God.

Then the almost daily journey to Liverpool was undertaken, not without occasional misgivings about the length of time consumed, morning and evening, on the way. Then followed the rapid round of varying interests. It was his joy that, allied with able partners and assistants, the details of business did not now demand much of his time or energy. The welfare of Liverpool was his engrossing business. His day's work done, he returned to his peaceful nook, with surroundings as soothing and refreshing as heart could desire.

As he was falling into the habits involved in his residing in Wales, a struggle arose in his mind. Was he justified in so far leaving Liverpool? It seemed to him for a time like "deserting his post." My

main work," he wrote at this time, "I more and more see, is to attend to spiritual and benevolent enterprises in Liverpool." Temporary losses in business gave emphasis to his difficulties. His doubt about the path of duty was grave and embarrassing: he was prepared, if God so guided him, to leave his lovely home and return to the city, where most of all, his duties and his affections lay. The struggle was severe, but in the end he resolved to abide by the choice he had made.

Though his life's passion was the improvement and elevation of Liverpool, the closer, quieter circle about him at Mount Alyn now claimed and received its share in his thoughts and plans. It was his delight to make every one happy around him, children, servants, farm-labourers, and all others. It was sometimes remarked that the governesses at Mount Alyn had "a good time." They were treated like members of the family. The servants, too, received all kindly consideration, and, for the most part, rewarded the kindness and confidence reposed in them, by fidelity and genuine attachment to the family. Very soon a "Cocoa Room" was established in the neighbouring village of Rossett, and various schemes were started to encourage sobriety, industry, and thrift.

Mr. Balfour struck one, as rather grudging himself the enjoyment of so much beauty and ease, while others were not so favoured. One pleasure, however, seemed for him to have no alloy. It was that of sharing his advantages with others. One bright summer day, a relative sat beside him in the open air at Mount Alyn. As their eyes ranged over the lovely glades and woodlands which stretched before them, she exclaimed, "This place is just an earthly Paradise." "Ah! yes," he answered with a sigh, "if only the crowd of toilers in Liverpool could enjoy it too. But there are many shut out from such things." He had a strange power of making the interests of multitudes his own.

Soon after he was settled in Mount Alyn, he was busy with plans for securing, to as many as possible of the faithful workers in the city, some share in the enjoyment of the beauty and repose of his own rural home.

There were certain cottages on the property which he set apart for tired toilers of the town. Fresh adjustments and alterations, involving considerable outlay, fitted them admirably for the purpose to which they were devoted. City missionaries have an arduous and trying duty to discharge. They have to visit the poorest and the foulest homes in times of health, and

especially of sickness. They have to encounter, among others, the drunken, the dissolute, the godless. It is not matter of surprise, if they sometimes become not only weary in body but jaded in spirit. For such, a temporary resting-place was prepared at Mount Alyn. A succession of them was to be found there, staying for two or three weeks at a time. We have often, when visiting Mount Alyn, looked in upon these good men, who, with their families, were enjoying the luxury of pure country air and lovely scenery, with verdure and flowers all about their doors. It did one's heart good to see the benefit they derived and the happiness they enjoyed. From these peaceful retreats they returned often with lighter hearts, and refreshed for a new stretch of difficult yet blessed work.

During summer, there was often high festival in the broad field above the house. Teachers and pupil-teachers from the city were there in scores. Games were organised, explorations were made among the woods. A large tent was spread under shadow of the trees that bordered the field; and there successive parties were liberally regaled, while words of welcome were spoken by the generous host, and words of encouragement and counsel by ministers and others who were invited to meet the visitors.

Members of the Young Men's Christian Association and groups of various kinds from the city found welcome and refreshment there. To sweeten a little the lives of such was one of the chief joys of Mr. Balfour's life. The way was made easy for all the guests; railway tickets were provided as well as hospitality on the spot. It was scarcely possible, on such occasions, to leave the beautiful scene and to watch the beaming countenance of the kind host, as with wife and children by his side he waved his farewells, without, the atmosphere breathed becoming more balmy, and the ills of life appearing less dark than before.

The impressions produced on the mind of a discriminating friend, who had comparatively little opportunity of seeing Mr. Balfour, will further illustrate his bearing at Mount Alyn and elsewhere.

"There was something so individual, joyous, simple, inspiring in Mr. Balfour's manner and tone, that it is impossible to give an adequate impression of 'the magic he used' over one: the most self-less of magicians, who, when he came to us, made life seem better worth living, and heartened each stumbler to step out more cheerfully and pluckily on the road before him. Words do not represent him, for one misses the intense accent of conviction, the simplicity of a child, the manly directness of all that he said. I

recall a sunny afternoon at Mount Alyn, when I sat with a friend in the park, where four hundred elementary school teachers were being royally entertained, the host radiant amongst them all. I recall some grave talk with Mr. Christopher Bushell, about the problems of life and the struggle against evil. The host came gaily up. 'You two look grave!' 'We are talking about difficult things;' and then learning what turn the conversation had taken, gently, firmly, simply he said, 'There is no end to those questions; I get no further; I do not understand them. God has given me a little bit of work to do for Him; I try to do it; *that* I understand.' And how he did his 'work!'

"Late one winter day, my daughter and I were on Mr. Balfour's door-step just as he and a friend were going out; we proposed to come another day, but Mr. Balfour would not hear of it. 'No, on no account; we cannot let you off; we must take the chance now;' and then suddenly, with a burst of eagerness and conviction that penetrated, 'Don't you know there is no wealth but in the love *we give* and the love we receive? Friendship is the greatest gift we have amongst us.' As we came away, we wondered if he was conscious how nearly he was reproducing Carlyle's words in 'Past and Present,' 'The wealth of a man is the

number of things which he loves and blesses, which he is loved and blessed by!'

"A month or so later, sitting at dinner in the midst of a gay company, (he was always at home in innocent gaiety), the talk turned on Dante's great words, 'In la sua volontade è la nostra pace,' and again, with that eager conviction which he never lost, he exclaimed, 'That is the secret of all true life.' If I were asked some of the special characteristics of the friend whose influence still seems to brighten life, I should say his joy in giving joy to others, in bettering the condition, bodily and mental, of every one, of every community he was brought in contact with, and his making religion beautiful even to those who think they dislike 'religious people.'"

When friends visited Mr. Balfour, he sometimes invited them to examine one field in which he took great delight. He had found it sour and sullen, producing nothing but rushes and coarse grass. He thoroughly drained it, and made it one of the most fertile of all his fields. As we stood with other friends among its teeming furrows, we have heard him take up his parable concerning it with an earnestness which left its impress on all hearers. "The water," he would say, "which is held in the miserly soil, brings a curse and not a blessing. But if, when it

falls from heaven, it is made to pass on to enrich other places, it leaves the brightest fertility behind. Just so it is with riches. Hoarded wealth, like hoarded water, sours and sickens the narrow soul that hoards it. But if wealth, when it flows in, is distributed through useful channels, it is blessed in the having and blessed in the giving." Such a parable, spoken on such a spot by such a man, was not likely to be without its good results. One powerful principle, in the regulation of his own life, was thus set forth before his friends. It was not the possession, but the use, of wealth that made him happy.

This principle guided him and Mrs. Balfour in small as well as in great things. His gardens and his greenhouses poured forth their lavish products wherever it was thought they were most needed or would bring most cheer. Among the sick and the suffering, the widowed and the wearied, many a languid eye has been made to sparkle with pleasure, when the well-filled basket has brought its message, not more of beauty and fragrance, than of the thoughtful love that lay behind. We recall an occasion on which Mr. Balfour walked up with us from the railway station to the house. It was a mellow autumn evening, and as we passed under the bending boughs of some

damson trees, we remarked how good was the promise of fruit. "Splendid!" he replied, "splendid! We must get a barrel of sugar and make jam for the Seamen's Orphans!" Just like himself. His mind was full of little plans of kindness as well as great schemes of philanthropy.

His farmyard was put under contribution for the benefit of his friends. When Christmas approached, turkeys and geese were despatched right and left, as gifts. It sometimes happened that this process was carried to such an extent, that it was necessary to go to market, for a Christmas turkey for the Mount Alyn family. To him the dainties of the table did not count for much. Mrs. Balfour says, "I cannot remember his ever remarking that any of the food at table was not good, or not well cooked. But if there were delicacies presented, he would often regret that others were not there to share them."

Mr. Balfour's love for children was great. Their simple ways found a quick response in his heart. He was ready, when he could, to take part in the games of the young, and found his joy in their enjoyment. He derived the purest pleasure from his own children. It was the delight of the little nursery party to go out with their father, to gather flowers for their mother or for visitors under their roof. He

was full of fun and gladness when he started his children on their ponies, and taught them how to guide and manage the little steeds.

But children bring with them care and sorrow, as well as joy. On the 13th of August 1870 occurs this brief but touching memorandum in his note-book:—"My wife gave birth to a baby boy. Let it be our extreme desire to train him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and to render back to Him with our whole hearts, the precious gift He has committed to our care." It did please God, five and a half years afterwards, to remove from earth this, his eldest son, Alister. The sorrow of the parents was deep, but their hearts were resigned. Mr. Balfour would not have strangers bear the little coffin to its quiet resting-place in Rossett Churchyard. Two of his own friends—ministers—were asked by him to do this latest task of love for his dear child. The boy was singularly winsome and lovely, but was unmurmuringly "rendered back" at the call of Him who had given him.

The minute thoughtfulness, which Mr. Balfour displayed for young and old, was such as often to astonish those who knew him best. His mind might appear brimful of some public enterprise, when he would suddenly begin to make inquiries, which

showed that the most invisible concerns of those he loved concerned him. He seemed to forget nothing of that kind. We have often known him, when hurrying off to an important meeting that demanded concentrated thought and interest, leave behind him some discriminating message of kindness for one in need of it, or some gift curiously adapted to the unexpressed but conjectured wish of a child or a youth. The great movements of heart and mind did not seem to obliterate the most delicate traces that affection had stamped upon a sensitive nature.

> . . . "All other joys go less
> To the one joy of doing kindnesses."

Mount Alyn House was simply though tastefully furnished. Mr. Balfour seemed to find it more difficult to spend money upon himself than upon others. On his acquisition of the property and afterwards, various additions to the house had to be built, and improvements carried out, in the grounds. On these occasions his horror of extravagance and ostentation was conspicuous. His friends could not but be amused at the contrast between his grudging allowance to himself of any little luxury, and his lavish liberality in purchasing gifts and ornaments for them. When men give to others, they are apt to consider

how such gifts may affect what they have to spend upon themselves. With him the position was reversed. He kept a jealous eye upon expenditure on his own behalf. *That* seemed to him a kind of waste. Might it not limit his power to help others, which to him seemed the great use and joy of having means and money? He had an eye for art, which, if he had indulged it, might have led to considerable expenditure. The love for music which he manifested in early life continued with him to the end. His ear was very delicate. He took keen delight especially in Handel's works; and the "Handel Festival" was one of his rare self-indulgences. But he did not allow these tastes to occupy much of his time. Life was too full for that, and the demands upon his energies too great.

"His attitude towards painting and music," says a relative, "is illustrated by a dream which he had during his last illness. He dreamed that some friends, about to leave the town, asked him to accompany them to a performance of the 'Messiah' before they left. He replied that he had not time to go, and that he would wait till he could hear the angels sing the 'Hallelujah Chorus.' *He could wait.* He recognised the mission of Art as a handmaid of truth; but with him moral and spiritual

questions came first." His own mission consisted in active efforts to benefit his fellows. Here lay his life-work, and the indulgence of tastes and preferences was willingly postponed to this. He cast no reflection on those who pursued a different course, but for himself, his feeling was that he had not time; like Him whom he followed, he must be about his Master's business.

While so employed, Mr. Balfour was not neglectful of the claims of the farm he kept in his own hand. He built a new farm-steading after the most approved models; he husbanded and applied manures with no small skill and success; and his stirks and sheep carried off prizes, in competition with those reared by agriculturists to the manner born. Intelligence and energy made themselves felt in this, as in all else he did. Yet, after all, this was but the by-play of his life.

We have been contemplating Mr. Balfour at home, in the enjoyment of health: we have also the opportunity of seeing how he bore himself in the time of sickness. While at Mount Alyn he was attacked by alarming illness. It was in February 1877. The illness proved to be complicated and exhausting. In the first weeks of the attack, Mrs. Balfour noticed that some anxiety pressed upon his mind. It was

not long before he explained the cause. He had been associated with Mr. Samuel Smith, in the scheme already described, for extending the usefulness of the Young Men's Christian Association, by the erection of new and ample premises. This scheme he then had very much at heart. Owing to the death of the architect and other causes, the cost proved to be much greater than had been anticipated. Mr. Balfour had given as largely as he felt justified in doing, and had applied for help to those who, he thought, would be likely to assist. And now, as he was planning how to meet the difficulty, he was laid aside and the heavy burden fell upon his friend.

This thought it was that burdened him. "Although," says Mrs. Balfour, "he was too ill to receive visits, our doctor consented to his seeing Mr. Smith, in the hope that his mind might be set at rest. Mr. Smith took the invalid's hand, and, after a few kind words, the anxious eyes of the patient sought the face of his friend, as he asked about the subject which weighed upon his mind. I shall never forget how kindly Mr. Smith responded, as he told him cheerfully that money was coming in, and that a friend had only that morning given a large sum to help the funds. Mr. Balfour would afterwards, if not at the moment, conjecture what was the origin of that impromptu donation. Meantime he

received this statement as a message from God that he was not to be disquieted, and when his visitor had left, he said, 'Now I am quite happy.'

"During the months of weariness and suffering which followed, a murmur never escaped him. He realised the promise, 'Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.' One day, when the cough was racking him, I expressed my distress that he should be so tried. He answered gently and almost cheerfully, 'Oh, I don't feel that way. I put myself into God's hands long ago, and I am content to remain there. He knows what is best for us, and I don't trouble myself.'

"No doubt the restful calmness of his spirit, at that time, was an important factor in his recovery. An eminent consulting physician came from London to see him, and gave it as his opinion that his lungs could never recover their tone, and that if he lived, he would always be a crippled man. Yet when recovery began, it met with no hindrances, and by Christmas-time of that year he was as active and energetic as ever, and his lungs were in a perfectly healthy condition. Nor had he ever afterwards anything in his physical condition, to remind him of that illness.

"We spent six months," continues Mrs. Balfour, "in France after his illness, first at Arcachon, and afterwards at Pau, when it was his delight to show kindness to other invalids, especially those who were not in good circumstances, and whom he could help to get little comforts which otherwise they must have lacked. Before our return to England, we spent a fortnight in driving among the Pyrenees. He often walked ahead of the carriage, his step active and light as of old, to the surprise of English friends who were with us, and who found it no easy matter to keep up with him."

The Rev. George Brown of Pau thus speaks of Mr. Balfour's visit to that place :—"It was there and then that I had the privilege of making my first acquaintance with Mr. Balfour. An entire stranger in Pau, he at once attracted all who met him, by his singular geniality of character and brightness of disposition, 'sweetening the breath of society,' as Dr. Chalmers used to say, and never entering a room without bringing a gleam of sunshine along with him. This happy natural gift, however, had behind it something still more important, for it soon became manifest that he was a man of purpose, and that the great aim of his life was to serve his own generation according to the will of God.

"Though he had more than enough on his hands at home, he forthwith entered into the Christian work of his place of sojourn, in the most practical way, cheering those who were engaged in it with sympathy and help.

"I mention one instance among many. The lamented M. Jean Bost addressed a large assembly of English and French people, at the residence of Mr. Oliphant of Pau, describing to them his unique group of 'Asylums' at La Force. His *conference* was a simple summary of facts; but as soon as he sat down, Mr. Balfour, who had come only as a listener, unable to repress his feelings, rose and gave such an estimate of the importance of the work, and such a tribute to the devotedness of its founder, that in a few minutes he communicated his own enthusiasm to the whole meeting. It was in furthering such works that Mr. Balfour was most truly in his element.

"As my acquaintance with him deepened, partly under his own roof at Mount Alyn, and partly during his subsequent brief visits to Pau, I was only the more impressed with the nobleness of his character. Personal inconvenience, fatigue, physical discomfort scarcely ever seemed to interrupt his cheery equanimity, but the frauds and oppressions of trade, and

the sins and sorrows of the people, stirred him up to a passionate vehemence of feeling and expression.

"Underneath all his Christian activity, it was an open secret that he was enjoying the rest of faith, as a member of God's redeemed family; and his spiritual convictions, which he did not hesitate to express, were those of one who had tried the foundation for himself, and found it firm and true."

Mr. Balfour's illness had for some time cast a shadow over his bright and beautiful home; with his restoration, sunshine returned. He emerged from sickness fresh and thankful in spirit, and with his appetite whetted for the work he loved, by his lengthened season of seclusion and repose. It was an unspeakable joy to him to find himself again in the midst of his friends and fellow-workers in the busy city; and by them his return was welcomed as a special gift from Heaven. We recall the first noon prayer-meeting he attended after his recovery, and the enthusiasm and gratitude with which he was received by many who for months had missed his genial and sympathetic presence. He presided, and his words were those of a man thankfully dedicating himself with fresh consecration to his God, after being tried as silver is tried. With special fervour he called on all his fellow-labourers to "work while it is to-day." It

was not difficult to see that the silent waiting-time of sickness was the source of much fruit unto holiness.

His diary contains the following brief entry in reference to his restoration to health :—

"Sunday, 26th May, 1878, 3 P.M.

Meeting for praise to-day for my recovery at Y. M. C. A. buildings.

Confession of sin and unbelief.

Praise for restored health and strength.

Prayer for Self-consecration :

„ „ Truth of heart :

„ „ Purity of heart :

„ „ Obedience of heart :

„ „ Wisdom :

„ „ Love :

„ „ Unselfishness :

„ „ Humility :

„ „ Grace that I may not dishonour Christian profession."

CHAPTER IX.

CONFLICT—LICENSE-LAW; ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM.

"Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"—JER. ix. 1.

"Lascia dir le genti;
Sta, come torre, fermo."—DANTE.

CHAPTER IX.

CONFLICT—LICENSE-LAW—ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM.

WE turn from these peaceful contemplations to scenes of a different kind. Gentle as Mr. Balfour was, there was no lack of backbone within his gentleness. He was capable, on occasion, of overpowering severity. It is reported of him that he once witnessed a cowardly trick played upon a little child. His indignation was kindled, and the weight of his riding-whip left a sharp and long lesson on the memory of the offender.

This element of indignation, even of wrath, at that which he considered wilful wrong, sometimes led him very far. In one instance, a journalist had taken up a position which he deemed not only baseless but mean. For years after, he could scarcely hear the name of the journal or the journalist without an explosion of keen displeasure. There were some instances in which an unfavourable judgment was too persistently adhered to; but these cases were few and far between.

Now it was a statesman whose conduct he thought void of principle, now it was a town-councillor. Such impressions once made seemed all but indelible. The intensity of his nature asserted itself, whether the judgment he formed was right or wrong. If he believed the path of honour had been left, under the cloak of some fair semblance, his thoughts and words were anything but mild. But he was slow to be convinced of wrongdoing in any man.

On one occasion a manservant in his household, who had been implicitly trusted, proved himself wholly and basely unworthy of such confidence. Mr. Balfour summoned him to his presence and gave him his dismissal. He made no charge, he said no word, but fixed his bright eye on the man with stern and withering condemnation. The culprit burst into tears, and left the room more abashed, than if ever so weighty a charge had been formulated against him.

Another phase of the same characteristic may be mentioned here. When Mr. Balfour had formed a fixed judgment on a matter affecting the welfare of the people, and had come to his own conclusions about the right way of dealing with it, he seemed to find it difficult to understand how any one could fail to see the subject as he saw it. He would meet a friend and pour his views and convictions into his ear, holding him fast

the while with his penetrating eye. It seemed as though he could not leave him till he had swept away his objections, carried his judgment, and won his sympathy. If there was fault in this commanding, almost intolerant impetuosity, it was the fault of a noble nature, and committed in a noble cause.

When sallying forth on some errand which must bring him into conflict with fellow-citizens who, in his judgment, were the doers or the defenders of wrong, we have heard him nerve himself for the distasteful task, by quoting the words of the Apostle, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." "We have got that to do too," he would say, "as well as to build up the cause of righteousness." And thus this man of peace prepared for war; this man of tender heart found himself not infrequently in the thick of heated controversy, and amid the din of stern conflict. "Well," he would often repeat, "we are to destroy the works of the devil."

"Christians are too *mealy-mouthed* now-a-days," he sometimes said. "Look at our Saviour; He spoke right out, and told in plain words what He meant. See with what blighting words He condemned the subterfuges and pretences of the Pharisees. His servants must have the courage to follow in His steps."

Mr. Balfour felt as the heroic General Gordon felt when he penned these words, "There would be no one so unwelcome to come and reside in this world as our Saviour, while the world is in the state it now is. He would be dead against all our pursuits, and be altogether *outré*." So Mr. Balfour was ready to be counted *outré*, ready to stand alone if need were, with his Master's smile to cheer him. With that encouragement he buckled on his armour for the fight, fearing no foe, and deterred by no danger. He seemed ever to hear the counsel sounding in his ear, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

In the years 1861, 1862, 1863, a policy, in reference to the licensing question, was in the ascendant among the Magistrates of Liverpool, the fatal consequences of which are bitterly felt and deplored to this day. It was the policy of free-trade in licenses. This policy wrought such mischief that it was found necessary, in answer to the protests of an injured and indignant people, speedily to put an end to it. But in the meantime a large number of public-houses had been added, in a town already groaning under an excessive supply. The grants were made in a few months: the labours of many years have only partially succeeded in cancelling them. No doubt the intention of the

Justices was good, but their ill-considered action brought a blight upon the city. Drunkenness increased, crime increased, mortality increased. The free-trade policy in licensing was not the only factor, but it was a powerful factor. The drink-interest gained a dangerous ascendency in the affairs of the town; and the fears of a hundred and twenty-three medical men of the borough, who, in the crisis of the free-trade policy, had memorialised the Bench of Magistrates, were more than justified. The brief but weighty words they used were these:—"Your memorialists regard with alarm and regret the increase, of late years, in the number and magnitude of public-houses in the borough, believing, from personal observation, that thereby disease and death are greatly increased."

In the year 1874 matters had reached such a pitch that public indignation could no longer be repressed. At that period the *Times* referred to the state of the town in the following terms:—"The condition of Liverpool, whether from a sanitary or moral point of view, is as far as possible from satisfactory. The death-rate of the town has for many years past exceeded the average of English mortality, and by the last return of the Registrar-General it is absolutely the highest of any of the eighteen large

English towns of which particulars are supplied. . . . We should incline to infer that the increase in crimes of drunkenness has been very closely connected with the increase in crimes of violence. . . . It would seem, upon a review of the whole evidence, that the criminal statistics and the health statistics of Liverpool point to the same conclusion: Liverpool is a town whose leading inhabitants are negligent of their duties as citizens."

This indictment was but the echo of what was being said in Liverpool itself. It may be inferred what were the convictions, and what the feelings, of men like Mr. Balfour under such a state of things. It was felt that all veils and disguises must be torn aside, that daylight must be let in upon many indefensible practices, and that the moral sentiment of the community must be invoked to overbear the self-interest of those—rich or poor—who were preying, like vultures, on the vitals of the community. His spirit was stirred within him, and along with like-minded citizens he resolved at all hazards and at any cost, "to battle against banded wrong."

"Thrice blest is he to whom is given
The instinct that can tell
That God is in the field, when He
Is most invisible.

Blest too is he who can divine
Where real right doth lie,

And dares to take the side that seems
Wrong to man's blindfold eye."

One autumn afternoon in 1874, when the present writer was riding in company with Mr. Balfour from Mount Alyn to Hawarden, this subject was the theme of conversation. The condition of our city was discussed; the degraded poverty of portions of it, to which we had been able to find no parallel on the continent of Europe, from Hammerfest to Palermo, from Moscow to Madrid. We spoke of the crime and pauperism which have so largely their root in strong drink. We spoke of our jails and police-establishments, which, with the taxes they necessitate, might be reduced by one-half, if excessive drinking were restrained. We spoke of the children of the drunkard made orphans, or worse than orphans. We spoke of the weird fact that every year in our Christian city there is a sacrifice, to the god of strong drink, of infants whose number cannot be accurately ascertained, but the source of whose suffocation is clearly indicated by the fact that infants are "overlaid" by their mothers most freely on Saturday and Sunday nights, after wages are paid, and that they are less exposed to this peril on Thursday and Friday, when wages are exhausted:—the slaughter of the inno-

cents. We spoke of the preparations which may be witnessed in certain charity-supported institutions in Liverpool, to receive the wounded and the bleeding who appear after the public-houses close, between eleven at night and one in the morning, especially on Saturday nights, with as much certainty as if we lived on the edge of a battlefield;—the row of bandages hung up in readiness, the lint to stanch the wounds, the surgeon waiting to minister to persons of either sex and every age, bruised with the fist of the drunkard, mauled with the poker of the city savage, or hacked with the broken bottle of the sunken sot, in the midnight brawl. We spoke of the undeniable fact that the police, who are appointed to restrain drunkenness, crime, and violence, are too often tampered with, "free drinks" being copiously put at their disposal, by keepers of public-houses, where close inspection might lead to heavy penalties.

We knew it; we had seen it all. And we knew that the depths of the moral degradation of our brothers and sisters, fed from the same poisoned source, had never been penetrated by human eye. Were we to take our ease while all this was going on? Were we to speak of such horrors with bated breath while a malign influence, which had gradually worked its way to power among us, was exerted to stifle in-

quiry and to gather godless gain from the headlong ruin of men, women, and children? As we looked on Mr. Balfour's countenance, determined and intense, we were reminded of the words of the prophet: "His word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."

Our pace quickened and our blood quickened as we rode in the keen air and dwelt on the keen topic. What was to be done? What step was to be taken? Various schemes were suggested, and that evening, ere our horses were stabled, it was resolved that, with the concurrence of parties concerned, a Clerical Conference should be summoned in Liverpool to consider the whole position. A general Clerical Conference had recently been held in Manchester: that in Liverpool was to be local. Such a Conference, consisting of ministers of religion of all denominations in Liverpool, was speedily summoned. It proved to be a most influential meeting. Among other resolutions, one was adopted calling upon the Mayor, in view of the circumstances above adverted to, to summon a public meeting of the inhabitants "to consider the causes of these evils, and the remedies that may be applied."

Such was the character of the dominant influence at that time, that the Mayor refused to call a town's

meeting. As might have been anticipated, this attempt at repression only impelled the memorialists to take further steps in the same direction. Accordingly a careful canvass of Liverpool was undertaken. The householders were asked whether they were in favour of the effective control of public-houses and beer-houses by an adequate staff of inspectors; of lessening the number of houses, especially by withdrawal of licenses after convictions; of shortening the hours of sale; of entire Sunday closing. These questions were answered in the affirmative by varying but vast majorities.*

A great meeting was held in the Philharmonic

* The following table of questions and answers gives the precise results of the canvass :—

Are you in favour of—

	Votes.		
	Yes.	No.	Majority.
1. Effective control of public-houses and beer-houses by an adequate staff of inspectors?	41,079	6,633	34,446
2. Lessening the number of houses, especially by withdrawal of licenses after convictions?	46,797	4,087	42,710
3. Shortening the hours of sale? . . .	43,857	7,510	36,347
4. Entire Sunday closing?	44,061	8,542	35,519

The number of voters, at that time on the Municipal Register, within the borough, was 68,879. There were about 2300 public-houses and beer-houses, many of whose managers and employés could not be expected to vote; there were many persons at sea or absent from home. There were 690 bad votes, from the papers being out of order. In these circumstances the 54,893 returns actually received must be considered as a very large proportion, and as giving a fair view of the opinions and wishes of the householders of Liverpool.

Hall, under the presidency of Thomas Matheson, Esq., to declare the result of the canvass, and to take action upon it. It was felt that the juncture demanded the appointment of a Vigilance Committee to watch over the matter; this accordingly was done.

Mr. Balfour was made a member of the Vigilance Committee, and his whole soul went along with the movement. Results of the greatest value flowed from the action described; and there can be no doubt that the Mayor's refusal to call a town's meeting supplied the necessary impulse to the movement.

The need for such an effort as that rapidly sketched may be inferred from the fact that in 1874 there were 23,303 cases of drunkenness reported in the Chief-Constable's annual statement, while the number of publicans convicted for permitting drunkenness was only three. In 1875 the number of publicans convicted for permitting drunkenness rose to fifty-seven. This is but one evidence of the necessity which existed, for demanding from the authorities, a firmer and more faithful administration of the laws bearing on intemperance.

While others were labouring outside, Mr. Balfour felt compelled to carry on the battle in his place in the Town Council, of which he was at that time a member. The Watch Committee of the Council in

particular, came in for severe criticism. A great point had been scored in the direction of sobriety and order by the town's canvass; and Mr. Balfour was not the man to leave the weapon furnished, unemployed.

The following extracts may suffice to show the intensity of his convictions and the earnestness of his pleadings. He laid before the Watch Committee a "memorandum" bearing date the 24th June 1875. In it he says:—"The facts must be brought to light, and an honest judgment on these must be formed and expressed, however unpleasant the duty may be. The mind of the people of our town has now been ascertained, and it is declared *against* the abounding temptations to intemperance. Our authorities are bound to respect that expression of opinion and those wishes, and to take the necessary steps to have these abounding temptations diminished.

"These temptations have been multiplied in Liverpool to such an extent, as is on all hands admitted to be unjustifiable. Round the Sailors' Home, where my own men are paid their wages, within a radius of a hundred and fifty yards, the Magistrates have licensed forty-six public-houses. Now one would have thought that the Magistrates, both in their individual and corporate capacity, would have been anxious to en-

courage the establishment, near the Sailors' Home, only of places to promote temperance and sobriety and good conduct, and to discourage every enticement to immorality; but, instead of this, house after house has been licensed for the sale of spirits, in most of which prostitutes are allowed to entice seamen to their ruin; and at these houses not only is there drinking, but also music, and in several of them, dancing.

"As a shipowner, I feel bound to say, the Magistrates in licensing such an undue number of public-houses round the Sailors' Home, and the Watch Committee in leaving these public-houses and music saloons practically uncontrolled, have betrayed the interests of my men; and I must point out that we, as a firm, suffer grievous prejudice from the losses brought upon our seamen through these manifold temptations, as our men, instead of getting to their families with their money in their pockets, are entrapped in public-houses, where they too often spend all their hard-won earnings, and do not have a penny left for the purchase of their outfit for a new voyage. . . .

"The present condition of matters is, I deeply grieve to say, fraught with disgrace to our authorities, and beyond all other evils is causing this most grave

one, that the community feel distrust at the manner in which the authorities have dealt, and are dealing, with the besetting evil and crime of our town, and that the well-disposed inhabitants do not enjoy the protection which the law provides."

After pleading for the appointment of a staff of well-paid inspectors of public-houses, he continues :—

"As matters now exist, the cost to the town of police and jails is enormous, and wholly unjustifiable, seeing that by energetic steps and effective execution of the Habitual Criminals Act, and of the Acts relating to public-houses, crime would be prevented, and a great saving effected in the sum now expended merely to punish crime. I cannot help saying that it is intolerable that the crime of causing people to become drunk, and of supplying drink to young children, should be committed every day with impunity by persons deriving pecuniary gain from the transaction, and that the whole weight of punishment should fall on the drunkard, who too often is merely the victim.

"I ought not to conclude without expressing the gratification I feel that, as the result of an impartial canvass of the householders of Liverpool, 41,079 replies are given in favour of the effective control of public-houses and beer-houses by an adequate staff of inspectors, against 6633 who have expressed a

contrary opinion; and it will be my hope that the representatives of the inhabitants may carry out the request, so generally and so earnestly made."

At a subsequent meeting of the Town Council, when the same question was under discussion, Mr. Balfour spoke as follows:—

"With reference to the extraordinary palliations urged by the Watch Committee for the frightful condition of our community, I will only remark that the Committee seem to make no account of the fact that at the last assizes there were seven persons tried for murder, all of whose offences arose more or less directly, from excessive drinking. I feel that if a record of agrarian crime equal to that had occurred in Ireland, the whole country would have been in agitation, and the Imperial Government would at once have interfered, and placed the districts where it occurred under something like martial law. . . . The Watch Committee dwell upon the importance of moral means towards reducing drunkenness, but those with whom I act point out, that moral means have no chance alongside of the immoral agencies which our authorities have planted and fostered in our town. . . . I am a farmer, and know very well that before I can get a field to produce a proper crop of good grain, it is necessary for me to dig out the

thistles and the thorns. . . . I do most fervently desire that the authorities of Liverpool shall deal with the unparalleled condition of our town through drunkenness, as the greatness of the evil demands, and that now, when we to some degree apprehend its extent, we shall apply remedies in due proportion to the exigencies of the case."

The result of this controversy was the appointment of a staff of public-house inspectors, but not on a scale at all adequate, in the opinion of Mr. Balfour and his friends, nor under such conditions as to give security against the obvious danger of the inspectors being tampered with, by the men whom they are appointed to watch.

We do not purpose entering further into detail on the questions raised above. Enough has been said to indicate the energy and fervour which Mr. Balfour threw into the discharge of his difficult duties. How difficult those duties were, and how much strain they threw upon his strength, may be imagined by those who consider the love of the man for all gentleness and goodness, and the delight he had in living in peace and harmony with those with whom he associated. But where duty called him he would go, and what principle demanded he would do. He translated into action the stirring words of the poet:—

"Perish policy and cunning,
Perish all that fears the light,
Whether losing, whether winning,
Trust in God and do the right.

Some will hate thee, some will love thee,
Some will flatter, some will slight;
Cease from man and look above thee,
Trust in God and do the right."

Many branches of the temperance reform, for which Mr. Balfour laboured, brought him into sharp conflict with some wealthy citizens interested in the traffic in strong drink. He made, for instance, a heavy onslaught upon a practice which prevailed on the sale of licensed premises, required for public improvements. A large price was paid for such premises by the Corporation because they were licensed; and then a demand was made for the removal to another district, of the license attached to such premises. Men had grown rich on practices like these. Mr. Balfour's moral sense was outraged; he took in hand some leading and notorious cases of the kind, and, with the dogged persistence and dauntless courage which were in him, he fought the battle. With a ruthless hand he tore away the disguises under which such proceedings had been veiled, and laid the community under lasting obligation, for the work he did. Such a task cannot be achieved without incurring the enmity of some. But so evident was the righteous-

ness of his purpose and the simplicity of his heart, that he was honoured for his work by his fellow-citizens in general, and credited with the purest motives even by those of his colleagues in the Council who differed from him.

He would have been more than human if, amid the contendings of the Town Council, with a heart burning with desire for the redress of the wrongs under which thousands in his own loved town were groaning, and with a lofty nature incapable of the faintest shadow of sympathy with meanness or unrighteousness, though perpetrated by men of wealth and position, he had always spoken with unruffled calmness, or preserved a temper in perfect balance, or proposed measures at once the wisest and most practical. We claim for him no such perfection; but this we venture to affirm, on the authority of some who have the best means of judging, that the unquestionable purity of his motives, and the unvarying loftiness of his aims, did not a little to elevate the tone of the Town Council, and in the most salutary way to affect the community at large.

His diaries reveal him often bending in prayer for help and guidance in the difficult work to which, he believed, God had called him in the Town Council. With a faith that did not fail, and a courage that

knew no wavering, he addressed himself to his stern task.

He was an active member, and for some years President, of "The Liverpool Popular Control and Sunday-Closing Association," whose chief aim was to secure "the effective control of the liquor-traffic by the ratepayers," and which sought meantime such objects as the following: viz., lessening the number of public-houses, shortening the hours of sale, Sunday-closing, thorough inspection, building up of back entrances to public-houses, and the like.

The eminently practical aims of this Society were exactly to his mind. His desire was to do as much as could be safely done at once, and with this object to unite all who were the enemies of excessive drinking.

A decided impulse was given to the cause in 1883 by the issue, under the auspices of this Association, of the "Drink-Map of the city of Liverpool," in which each public-house was indicated by a red mark.* So blotted and blurred with scarlet spots were certain portions of the city, frequented by sailors or inhabited by the very poor, that the map was humorously described as "Liverpool in scarlet

* This map was carefully prepared by the Secretary, Mr. Nathaniel Smyth, a faithful and life-long worker in the temperance cause.

fever." Persons who had not carefully examined the subject could scarcely believe that the map was not a caricature, or take in the fact that they dwelt in a city so pestilently drink-smitten. The silent appeal of the Drink-Map has not been without its influence in the great struggle that had to be waged. It was often employed by Mr. Balfour as an unanswerable argument.

Mr. Balfour's vigilance, about everything bearing on Temperance Reform, continued to the end, and was not abated when he was sinking under the influence of a mortal malady. During his own last illness, the Recorder of Liverpool died. On the 8th of February 1886 Mr. Balfour wrote to us as follows: —"You will see that the Recorder has been taken away. I think we ought at once to appeal to the Mayor and Town Council, to urge that precautions be taken, respecting the appointment of his successor, so that he shall not practise as a barrister in the local courts, nor be a standing counsel for publicans. I would esteem it a favour if you would kindly consider the whole subject. . . . If you would arrange for the Committee of the Popular Control Association to meet some afternoon and consider a memorial, I should try to be present and give such aid as I can." The meeting was held accordingly, and the sick man

was there, as eager as in the days of highest health, to sweep away an unquestionable and most mischievous abuse. On the 22nd of February, as President of the Popular Control Association, he signed a memorial to the Town Council in which the evil is laid bare. The memorial contains these words :—"That the same person should, on one day, plead as a barrister, in favour of Publicans appealing from the City Bench to the County Bench, on the Transfer and Removal of Licenses, and should on another day, as Recorder, hear and adjudicate on appeals by Publicans (possibly his former clients), when convicted by the City Bench of violations of the Licensing Law—is calculated, in the judgment of this Association, to prejudice the interests of justice, and to bring discredit on the administration of law." Mr. Balfour also signed an appeal to the Home Office on the same subject. The matter is of interest as showing with what tenacity the dying man pursued to the last, by every means in his power, the objects for which he lived. It may be mentioned that the end he sought has been practically attained.

It is pleasant to be able to close this recital by the statement, that since Mr. Balfour and his friends began this conflict in Liverpool, with drunkenness and death, many influences have conspired to bring

about a better state of things. The number of public-houses has sensibly diminished, crimes of violence have abated, and the death-rate has largely decreased, being, at the time we write, lower than it has ever been since health statistics began to be tabulated.

An aged citizen who, in his boyhood, lived at the verge of "the old churchyard," tells us of a quaint inscription on a gravestone, which he often pondered with awe as a child, but which has long since been effaced. It ran thus:—

"This town's a Corporation
Full of crooked streets;
Death is the Market-place,
Where all men meets.
If life was merchandise
That men could buy,
The rich would surely live,
The poor must die."

If there ever was a time in Liverpool when the feelings of the rich toward the poor were such as are suggested in these lines, that time is passing, and must pass, away, as certainly as the old letters graven on the tombstone. The man we speak of in this volume—and he did not stand alone—spared neither pains nor fortune that he might elevate and bless the poor.

CHAPTER X.

LICENSE-LAW—LEGISLATIVE REFORM.

"A Government should so legislate as to make it easy to do right and difficult to do wrong."—W. E. GLADSTONE.

"As I looked at the Hospital wards to-day, and saw that seven out of ten owed their diseases to alcohol, I could but lament that the teaching about this question was not more direct, more decisive, more home-thrusting than ever it had been. . . . It is when I myself think of all this, that I am disposed to rush to the opposite extreme, to give up my profession, to give up everything, and to go forth upon a holy crusade, preaching to all men—*Beware of this enemy of the race.*"—SIR ANDREW CLARK, M.D., Physician in Ordinary to the Queen, Senior Physician at the London Hospital.

"Ah Lord God! there is nothing too hard for Thee."—JER. xxxii. 17.

CHAPTER X.

LICENSE-LAW—LEGISLATIVE REFORM.

WHILE largely engaged in the effort to secure the better administration of the existing licensing and other related laws, Mr. Balfour was deeply convinced that an entire change in the licensing system was essential. Administrative reform, and legislative reform, were his two watchwords; the former at once, the latter as soon as it could be obtained. He believed that temperance reform was absolutely essential to the good of the people, and that without it, no other reform would greatly avail for our country. Hence he spared no pains in examining the legislative experiments which had been tried. He visited Sweden, to inquire into the Gothenburg system. He visited Portland and other places in the State of Maine, to examine the working of the Maine Law. On these and similar subjects he made valuable contributions, by voice in the

Social Science Congress and Temperance Conferences, and by pen in pamphlets, articles in the *Contemporary* and other Reviews, a letter to the Duke of Westminster, &c.

His ripest opinion was in favour of popular control, in combination with Imperial control, and is thus presented in his own words :—"As an indispensable preliminary to all license reform, I believe a change in the license authority must be made, transferring it from the Magistrates to Boards expressly chosen for the purpose by the ratepayers. . . . But Licensing Boards would be only one part of the foundation of a right license-law. Another indispensable provision would be the control by Government, of the action of Local Licensing Boards, in the interests of morality and public order. It might happen that in some districts the state of public opinion was so degraded that the Boards, if unfettered, would vote even for increased facilities for drinking. To meet this risk, a confirming authority ought to be established, which might consist of, say, three or more License Commissioners, to be appointed by the Home Secretary. These would require to be persons of experience and responsibility, capable of organising, and able to take a part in reducing our drinking system within such limits

as to be safe for the State and beneficial to the individual." *

To show that a district might with perfect safety and with great advantage be closed against public-houses, he was fond of employing the following argument, which, in the same article, he states thus :—

"Take a case existing on a large scale in the town of Liverpool at this moment. The firm of Mr. John Roberts, M.P. for the Flintshire Boroughs, has had large dealings in land, in Liverpool. Mr. Roberts' firm has acted on the principle of prohibiting the erection of public-houses on the estates, large and small, which they purchase; and Mr. Roberts believes that, indirectly at least, they have been gainers in each instance. The lands which have passed through the hands of Mr. Roberts' firm are in extent something over 200 acres. The number of houses built or in course of erection thereon is about 6000, and the population directly affected may be set down as from 35,000 to 40,000. Mr. Roberts states that he never yet heard of a complaint being made of the want of a public-house, either from the house-owners or the tenants, although some of the people living within the area to which the prohibition applies

* "Intemperance and the Licensing System," by Alexander Balfour; reprinted from the *Contemporary Review*, pp. 26, 27.

would have to walk three-quarters of a mile to obtain a glass of beer. This testimony is the more striking, arising as it does among the people of a town so over-supplied with public-houses as Liverpool.

"Here, then, is a crucial case, one upon a sufficient scale, showing how drink-shops can be, and actually are, absolutely prohibited, without any of the evil results ensuing which the Lords' Committee anticipate. The prohibition of public-houses on Messrs. Roberts' estates is absolute, and yet this prohibition is neither 'inoperative nor mischievous,' as the Committee deliberately state that it would be."

Mr. Balfour was greatly interested in the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance, and recognised in it the proof of an important advance in the education of the nation on this subject. He drew many of his weapons from the Blue-Books which contained this report, and made them the subject of very close and repeated examination. When his portrait was painted by Long, he stipulated that this report should lie beside him. He first received the report when an invalid at Arcachon; and the abundant notes and comments, with which he filled the margins, bear testimony to the intense interest with which he viewed the report.

He was greatly attracted to the Church of England

Temperance Society by the breadth of its platform and the comprehensiveness of its provisions. He saw that the drink problem in England was far too complex and difficult, to be solved by any one remedy or set of remedies. It had to be attacked all round, by moral suasion, by educational provisions, and by legislative measures of a comprehensive kind.

This great subject brought Mr. Balfour into acquaintance with Canon Ellison, the chairman of the Church of England Temperance Society. He kept up a close correspondence with Canon Ellison almost to the day of his death, and a warm friendship sprang up between them. The letters which remain are full of interest, as regards the recent history of the temperance reform, but are too detailed and technical to be suitable for these pages.

In one of these letters to Canon Ellison, Mr. Balfour gives brief and clear expression to that which was his constant object in all the agitation :— "My aim in taking part in the (Oxford) Legislative Conference is to assist in ascertaining what is *morally right*, with the view of insisting that our English law shall be in conformity with the Divine law."

Again he says :—"It is not possible to overestimate the importance of securing for our laws a moral basis, seeing that the administration of such laws will bring

about results that are salutary; while, on the other hand, laws that are not regulated by a moral principle can only produce effects that are pernicious." And in illustrating this principle he points out how grievously it is violated:—"We may safely affirm, that no country having regard to the welfare of the people, would begin a system of licensing such as now exists in England. It has grown up on imperfect information and in the course of many years, and it has been the means of placing in the hands of the few, a monopoly of enormous value, which unhappily is used most unscrupulously for selfish aims in the accumulation of wealth, regardless of the frightful cost to the community in pauperism, crime, and death."

Mr. Balfour sought such reform in our laws from whatever party held the reins of government. He was a steadfast Liberal, but many of the friends he loved and trusted most were found in the opposite camp. He was no party politician, and cared for no party ends or triumphs. The side of politics which faced towards the social and moral amelioration of the people was that which attracted him most. Just as in his ecclesiastical views he was an unwavering Presbyterian, sometimes saying to the present writer, "I will live and die a Presbyterian," and yet his was a spirit of the largest catholicity. He worked

enthusiastically with men of various Churches when their end was good, and gave them princely help, though their Church banner was not his. He was as much above sectarianism in religion as he was above party in politics. In this question of temperance reform, as in other questions, he was united in the closest bonds with earnest men who agreed with him neither in creed nor in politics. It was not, therefore, surprising at his death to find, in a Church of England family paper, a notice of Mr. Balfour which claimed him as an attached Churchman. He was a Churchman in the highest sense. He worked with all those who worked for his Master, and loved all those who loved the Lord Jesus Christ.

This characteristic is brought out in a letter to the present writer from the Bishop of Sodor and Man, formerly Archdeacon Bardsley of Liverpool, a most earnest promoter of Temperance reform. He says: —"I write a few lines, bearing chiefly upon our dear friend the late Alexander Balfour's connection with our Church of England Temperance work. Looking back upon the past, and intimately associated as I have been with that work from the first, I can confidently affirm that to no one man have we been so signally indebted, as to Mr. Balfour, for the development of our organisation, and the practical character

of our operations. It was in 1873 that I first made his acquaintance. At that time the Rev. E. R. Wilberforce, Vicar of Seaforth, now the Bishop of Newcastle, and myself, were the honorary secretaries of a struggling local temperance society. We were alike deeply impressed with the necessity of some striking effort, which might, so far as the Church of England was concerned, arouse the slumbering conscience of the Liverpool public. Our device was to promote a round-robin to the Archbishop of York, signed by fifty of the Liverpool clergy, begging his grace to visit Liverpool, and to address the clergy, as well as a public meeting, upon the crying sin of intemperance, and the necessity of some special effort to counteract it. Our plan was marvellously successful. Two hundred of the clergy were addressed by the Archbishop, and were subsequently entertained at a dinner-tea, by the late Mr. John Torr, M.P. In the evening the Philharmonic Hall was packed by an enthusiastic audience, over which the late Bishop of Chester presided. The overflow crowded Hope Hall, and also the Institute Hall. The London as well as the local papers gave the fullest reports. In this great success no one rejoiced more heartily than Mr. Balfour, although he had had no part in it. He was at my door before ten the following morning to offer

his congratulations, and to say that he recognised fully what an efficient instrument the Established Church might become, in the furtherance of distinctively temperance work, and that for such an effort we might always rely upon his sympathy, his counsel, and his purse. From that day to the last week of his life, we were constantly receiving proofs that his promises were no vain words.

"It is impossible for me to recall the steady help which he gave during many years, without paying the tribute of my admiration for the character of the man. The work was always undertaken by him on religious grounds, and again and again do I bring to mind the simple words of prayer with which he prefaced our discussions, when I asked his counsel on some pressing point. His unstinted liberality was known to all, but only those who knew him best could realise the unselfishness of his disposition. He was always pressing others to the front, and claiming for them the praise which was really due to his own personal efforts. In temperance work, other men might have the credit which gathered round the Ellison testimonial, and the visit for conference on the Temperance question, of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, M.P., and a number of other incidents in connection with our special efforts; but it was Mr. Balfour who

suggested the ideas, and it was his unbounded generosity which made such efforts possible.

"And not only did our friend thus unselfishly give prominence to his fellow-workers in the campaign. It was his kindly sympathy and tender consideration which first marked the failing strength of some among them, and supplied the needed rest and change by putting at their disposal his 'House of Rest' at Mount Alyn, or by giving them the means for a Swiss tour. In such respects I never knew his equal."

Mr. Balfour regarded the United Kingdom Alliance as a splendid aggressive organisation. He did not, indeed, entirely agree with all its modes of action or expression, nor did he think it was pursuing the wisest course, in seeking "to prosecute the total and immediate legislative suppression of the traffic in all strong drinks." His object was to put the control of the liquor-traffic into the hands of the ratepayers. His practical mind aimed at doing something for his own generation, at taking one step at a time, at securing every advantage which was attainable, though all this might be a very long way from the total legislative suppression of the liquor-traffic.

Yet he saw that the Alliance sympathised with

and helped all good movements in the direction of temperance reform, and he became one of its Vice-Presidents. He felt that there should be roo in so admirable a Society, for earnest temperance men of various shades of opinion. But, as might have been expected, his own position was not always unassailed. Referring to such a difficulty which arose some years ago, he writes to Mr. Williamson as follows :—" I have a letter from A. G. this morning, telling me that there was a 'rumpus' at the annual meeting of the United Kingdom Alliance yesterday, over the retention of my name as a Vice-President. I am extremely sorry to see the animus of extreme men. But this is a small matter. They have introduced into one of the resolutions, bearing on the duty of voters in elections of members of Parliament, the clause, 'and for such candidates only,' which as it seems to me, would prevent members of the U. K. A. from voting for such men as our friend Mr. Samuel Smith ! I fear I may not be able to remain a member of the U. K. A., which I should deeply regret."

He did, however, continue at his post in the Alliance, and all his influence was employed in favour of the adoption of what he regarded, as wise and unchallengeable methods of opposing the tremendous evil of intemperance. He knew of no agency of like

power and momentum, and though sometimes in embarrassment, he could never tear himself from it.

Mr. Balfour's attitude to those who did not go all lengths with himself, on the subject of temperance, was one of forbearance and charity. He was practically an abstainer, except when taking a little claret under medical advice, but he did not bind himself by any pledge. If his guests chose to take wine, it was provided for them at his own table; he did not judge for them. His battle, as we have seen, was against the public-house system, with its bar-drinking and all the temptations and seductions by which it has ruined its tens of thousands. Yet as life advanced, he grew more and more apprehensive of possible harm from the use of alcoholic beverages of any quality, in any quantity, and in any quarter. This may be illustrated by reference to one of his innumerable kindly ways. At one time he was in the habit of sending supplies of claret at Christmas, to some of his clerical friends, under the impression that in their hard work of body and mind they would be the better of some stimulant. In later years, he sent to the same friends, boxes of good tea instead of wine.

During the last two or three years of his life, Mr. Balfour was strongly impressed with the smallness of the consumption of milk in our large towns. He de-

sired by means of "Revenue legislation" to discourage the use of beer, in the hope that its place would be largely filled, by the consumption of wholesome milk. Upon this subject he corresponded with Mr. Adam Young of the Inland Revenue Department. To this correspondence Mr. Young refers in the following terms:—"He was so animated by a single desire to promote the religious and physical well-being of the people, that it was always a deep pleasure to me to give him any information that lay in my power, in a private capacity. When he called at Somerset House, he was always most solicitous not to encroach on public time. For a man so full of the business he came to press, this considerateness was quite a strong feature in his character. In his correspondence also he was always the courteous gentleman, yet constantly fearing lest the earnestness of his convictions should impart too much force to his language. This gave a great charm to his correspondence, which, while it revealed the man and spoke his heart, was warm with kindly feeling and marked by gracious manner."

Considerate always of the time and feelings of others, he was ever ready to acknowledge his error, if impetuosity had even seemed to carry him too far.

The characteristics referred to by Mr. Young are

illustrated, in a note addressed to him by Mr. Balfour, bearing date, Liverpool, 6th February 1886:—

"I greatly fear I may have been hurried, in my last letter, to say things you may consider beyond my province. If so, may I beg you to forgive it, as I continually commit such mistakes. My humble hope is, that we may be permitted to assist in laying down principles for legislation affecting the sale of strong drink, and for our fiscal system, that may be beneficial to our country ever afterwards; and these righteous principles are not usually discovered and applied without discussion. . . . If children were instructed throughout the whole country, in a few elementary facts regarding diet, such as those supplied by Dr. Bell regarding milk *versus* beer, we should, I cannot doubt, be laying the foundations for temperance, in our nation. We must just go on, doing our best to fulfil the Scriptural injunction to 'work out our own salvation,' from intemperance and every evil thing."

Mr. Balfour regarded as a great source of mischief, the disparity between the tax on alcohol in whisky and the tax on alcohol in beer. In a letter addressed to the Duke of Westminster he says—"The price of a glassful of Irish whisky in the public-houses here (Liverpool) is threepence; but the price of the same

quantity of alcohol in the beer commonly sold in the public-houses here, is not threepence, but only twopence. If our wretchedly degraded men and women want to become intoxicated, this is readily attainable, both because public-houses so abound, and because strong beer is sold at such a low charge. I do not think that, either on fiscal or moral grounds, the inequality of the duty on beer, as compared with the duty on spirits, can be justified. The excessive consumption of spirits is, on moral grounds, discouraged by the imposition, by the Legislature, of a high duty, as high as Parliament dares to propose, without giving encouragement to illicit distillation. I venture to say that there exists an absolute necessity to deal with the duty on beer on the same principle, and so to arrange the incidence of taxation, that the brewing of strong beer shall be sharply checked, and that the beer brewed for and sold to working-people shall be of a light and unintoxicating character. I may be pardoned if I say that this department of the temperance question has received far too little consideration, at the hands both of Parliament and of those who seek to promote temperance."

In a letter dated February 1886, to Mr. Adam Young, deploring the same evil, he says—"Knowing as we all do that a grievous anomaly exists, surely

Mr. Gladstone will take up the subject this year, and place it on a righteous basis. . . . Brewers ought not to be allowed to brew from deleterious materials, and thus poison people in their 'tied-up houses.' There are many wrongs to remedy, but let us get begun, and one by one, in due time, they will be disposed of."

It was his earnest wish to see strong beer replaced by lighter beer. When visiting Munich, he took the opportunity of making himself thoroughly acquainted with the processes by which the light Bavarian beer, universally used there, is brewed. He had samples sent home to be analysed, for comparison with English ales. A great advantage would be gained, by the substitution of Bavarian beer, for the strong beer which is so generally consumed in our public-houses.

To supersede, so far as possible, beer by milk, was a still stronger desire, which occupied much of his thoughts in the closing weeks of his life. In a letter addressed to Mr. Adam Young, on the 12th of February 1886, he quotes the following words of Sir Henry Thompson :—"There is a notable example of a single animal product, perhaps the best which can be applied as a complete food—one prepared by nature, furnished in great abundance, and which we are all well acquainted with—viz., milk. . . . Let us

recall the fact that, excepting only the article of wheaten bread, milk is perhaps the most universally employed food in this country; and I am not quite sure that the exception made above is correctly stated to be so." He then goes on to say:—"Can we believe, with Sir Henry's words before us, that the supply and use of milk have received adequate attention, from the upper and governing classes? May I be allowed earnestly to appeal to you to assist towards a remedy? To the agricultural and landed interest this is, I believe, a vital question. Being a farmer, on a small scale, as well as a merchant, I may be excused for speaking in such positive terms." And after dwelling on the boundless sources of the supply of wheat in climates more adapted for its growth than our own, and also upon the severe competition encountered from America, New Zealand, &c., in the production of cattle and sheep, he continues:—"From what source is relief to the farmer and landowner to come? I answer, from the displacement of beer, by the greatly extended use of milk, amongst all classes of our population. And I venture to say that the statistics which you have recently furnished show that, were this to occur, an enormous saving would be effected in the diet of poor people, while to farmers and landowners the

increased use of milk and vegetables would give the relief which, in their present distress, they require.

"At page 5 of his book on British dairy-farming, Mr. Long quotes from the address of Professor Sheldon, who estimates the consumption of milk as an article of diet, including what is employed in cooking, as about fifteen gallons per annum per man, woman, and child in these islands. The consumption of milk in our Orphanages in this city is about six pints per child per week; and it is remarkable that in the Seamen's Orphanage, with which I am connected, children on their admission are found not to like milk. When they discover that they have to take milk or nothing, they soon acquire a taste for it, and after a month they like it. The simple food supplied to these children, along with other arrangements for their welfare, causes them to be remarkably healthy, as you can judge from the fact that last Sunday, and the previous Sunday, of 206 boys in the Orphanage, 205 attended chapel.

"The consumption of beer in England you have shown to be four and a half pints per person per week. With the necessary instruction as to diet in our schools, and more general information on the subject among the people, and with better legislation and better fiscal arrangements, we may hope ere long

to see great changes in the consumption of beer. And my hope is, that a great increase in the use of milk is impending.

"At page 4 of his book Mr. Long shows from Professor Sheldon's figures, that the value of milk, at the price paid to the farmer, of sevenpence per gallon, is £47,000,000 a year; this includes what is used in the production of butter and cheese. My hope is, that with the assistance of the Commissioners of Excise, we may soon see this milk product doubled in quantity. I believe it may be increased threefold, with the highest advantage to all classes of the community. But to obtain this, Mr. Gladstone must prepare his Budget on righteous foundation-principles, and in conformity with his utterances on the milk question in Birkenhead,* as I am sure he will do, whereby the use of beer may be discouraged, and the use of milk not hindered or destroyed, in our large cities, as it now is. In short, the recommendations of the Commissioners of Excise must correspond with the teachings of the Minister of Education, and if so, cardinal changes and most beneficent results will come to the whole nation."

In a letter written to Canon Ellison, in February

* Speech delivered by Mr. Gladstone on the 16th October 1884, on the occasion of his cutting the first sod of the Mersey Railway.

1886, Mr. Balfour says:—"I have been in correspondence with Mr. Young of the Inland Revenue Office, who has been most helpful in furnishing information. He sends the following most important figures, supplied by an eminent chemist, giving the constituents of milk as compared with beer:—

Ordinary.	Weight of Solid Matter per Pint.	Albuminous Matters.	Carbo-Hydrates.	Fat.	Ash.
	Ounces.				
Milk	2.5	0.83	0.83	0.70	0.14
Beer	1.0	0.20	0.74	none	0.06

"The residue in milk is more than double that in ordinary beer. Milk is about four times richer than beer in albuminous or flesh-forming substance. It is twice as rich as beer in mineral matter. It contains fat, which is absent in beer. The general conclusion is, that the solid matter in a pint of milk is upwards of five times as valuable, as an article of human food, as that in the same quantity of beer.

"These facts and figures being reliable, it seems to me they would do to be published as wall-papers to be hung up in schools. Indeed I suggested this yesterday to our School Board, who, I am sure, would be willing to have them hung on the walls of our Board Schools, if the wall-papers were supplied. If

children are instructed in a few elementary facts respecting diet, I feel assured this would prove the great foundation of temperance in our nation."

The need for restraining the national thirst for beer is illustrated by a letter from Mr. Balfour to Mr. Young at a somewhat earlier period. It bears date, Mount Alyn, 18th April 1883:—"The drink bill of 1882, which appeared in the *Times* of the 26th March, contained figures at which Dominie Sampson would have cried 'PRODIGIOUS!' and at which I am struck with perfect dismay. The fourth item of consumption is beer, of which the quantity is reckoned at nearly 1,000,000,000 of gallons! Now the population of the kingdom is about 35,000,000. Deduct the number of total abstainers, said to be about 4,000,000, the number of children and youths up to fifteen, say about one-third, or 10,000,000. This gives a consumption of one gallon a week for every person who drinks, and is above fifteen years of age, in the United Kingdom.

"But were we to deduct from the number of beer-drinkers most of the population of Scotland and Ireland, who drink very little beer, and the numbers of English men and women who do not take beer, or who take very little, we should arrive at the conclusion that the beer-drinking population is not more

than perhaps ten or twelve millions, who consume the stupendous quantity of nearly 1,000,000,000 gallons of beer. What the consequences are, to themselves and their families, of this annual waste of money, waste of time, incapacity for work, sorrow at home, and future degradation and ruin, I leave you to imagine."

Mr. Adam Young writes to Mr. Balfour on this subject as follows :—"The amount of solid nourishing matter in the best of beer is so small that I never myself attached much importance to it. What there is seems rather inclined to choke the biliary ducts and determine the formation of fat, and not muscle or sinew; so that I think nothing of beer as a food. I wish all drinkers of beer could be got to think of it as a sort of sauce, not to be taken without some solid to be qualified by it, even were that solid only a crust of bread."

No one can seriously consider such facts without coming to the conclusion that Mr. Balfour's earnest effort, so far as possible, to supplant beer by milk, was one pointing in the direction of a great national benefit.

After reading these views, it will not be matter of surprise that Mr. Balfour, though aware that his life hung upon a thread, threw much of the energies of

his latest days into an effort to give practical effect to his opinions. The mere proclamation of what he regarded as valuable truth never satisfied him, if it was possible to embody that truth in fruitful endeavour. His desire was to found a company for the purpose of meeting the want he deplored. In a printed letter, dated the 9th April 1886, which was in the press at the time of his death, he says :— "Good fresh 'separated' milk at twopence per quart would certainly supply an article of primary necessity, and we must believe that in time, it will obtain a large sale. To accomplish this it is proposed to erect milk-separating machinery in Liverpool, near a railway terminus, to import the best country milk, to separate the cream on arrival, and thus supply cream and fresh butter, as well as separated milk."

This company was not intended to interfere with the already existing Dairy Company, in which also he took a deep interest.

Soon after Mr. Balfour's removal by death, supplies of milk began to pour into the city from various fresh sources, so that it was found unnecessary to persevere with the projected company for supplying milk "separated" by a new process.



CHAPTER XI.

VALPARAISO.

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way."—PSALM xxxvii. 23.

> "Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
> So didst thou travel on life's common way,
> In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
> The lowliest duties on herself did lay."
>
> —WORDSWORTH.

CHAPTER XI.

VALPARAISO.

IN 1860 Mr. Balfour paid his first visit to Chile, remaining in Valparaiso for two or three years. Change of place to some extent changed the objects of his interest, but made no alteration in the bent of his soul. Wherever he was, his life seemed to carry out the apostolic precept, "To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Among those settled in Valparaiso before his arrival, he found Mr. Elliot W. Davidson, now of Liverpool, with whom he formed a warm and lasting friendship, and in whose family he was a constant and welcome guest.

Mr. Davidson tells how at once, on his arrival, he plunged into beneficent Christian work. His instincts seemed to guide him to the right field of labour. Within a week of his setting foot in Valparaiso, he was to be found in the hospital, in which were placed sick and disabled sailors from both men-of-war and merchant-ships. Might he be allowed to bring fruit

and flowers to the invalids? The request was readily complied with; and thus favourably introduced, his next request was, that he might be permitted to read to the men. This request too was granted. When the men became convalescent, he would inquire if they had written to their friends at home, and if not, he would get them to write, or failing their ability to do so, would write in their behalf. So, like a good angel, he went in and out among the sick sailors, smoothing the pillow of sickness, and pointing the sufferers to that Friend who would never fail them, at home or abroad. Here, as at home, he had assistants in the office well qualified to carry on the details of business, and was thus enabled to follow the leadings of his heart, and to occupy a considerable portion of his time in work like this.

He was not long in finding his way to the Spanish Hospital, though not able at first to speak much Spanish. The hospital at that time was badly administered, and was altogether in a very poor condition. Mr. Balfour soon secured friendly relations with the hospital authorities, and was able quietly to get reform after reform introduced, till in a few months the whole aspect of the institution was altered. During all his stay in Valparaiso he continued his interest in and his visits to the hospital.

Mr. Balfour found that a considerable number of English artisans were settled in Valparaiso, many of them engaged in railway work at the extreme end of the town. He at once interested himself, in the most lively and practical manner, in their welfare. The distance, from his own residence on the *Cerro Alegre* to the railway, did not prevent him from paying frequent visits to the men who laboured there. Some were serious, right-thinking men, but many were careless. Mr. Balfour lost no time in setting on foot efforts for their social and moral amelioration. He started a reading-room for the artisans, which was used for social and religious meetings. The men, speedily convinced that this new-comer was their true friend, gave heed to his counsels, and ere long the good wages earned were put to a good use, by many who before had squandered them, and a marked change took place among them, which made itself easily visible in their appearance and manners. The bond thus formed was a very salutary and a very endearing one. When, at length, the time for Mr. Balfour's return to England arrived, the men invited him to a farewell tea-party, at which, in their own downright and simple way, they bore testimony to the gratitude they felt toward him. The speech of one working-man

was this: "Mr. Balfour, we respect you: that is not it—we love you."

Among other efforts made by him for the good of the people, Mr. Balfour initiated the idea, and was one of the founders, of a savings-bank. He also, along with the Rev. Dr. Trumbull, the excellent Protestant pastor in Valparaiso, and Mrs. Williamson, who with her husband, Mr. Balfour's partner, joined him in Valparaiso in February 1862, aided in the formation of a Temperance Society. This was probably the first society of the kind formed on the west coast of South America.

When Mr. Balfour went to Valparaiso in 1860, he went alone; when he returned to it in 1867, he was accompanied by his wife, and his home thus became the centre of still more genial influence and extensive usefulness.

During both periods of Mr. Balfour's residence in Valparaiso, the Rev. Dr. Trumbull, still the much-respected senior minister of Union Church, was his pastor, and became his intimate friend. Dr. Trumbull, accordingly, had the best opportunities of knowing his "manner of life, purpose, faith." We cannot do better than avail ourselves of some of Dr. Trumbull's reminiscences of him. He says:—"During the quarter of a century that has elapsed since Mr. Balfour first

set foot in Valparaiso, he has been a leader and originator in many schemes for education, culture, and piety. It was delightful to hear him in prayer. He manifested such reverence, that it was always uplifting to unite with him in calling on the name of the Lord. Our climate here is unfavourable to activity in religion, as in other matters; but it could not repress his zeal. He gave an impulse to Christian effort among us, the effect of which has not yet disappeared. There are working-men here to-day, who cherish the recollection of his visits to them at their rooms at the railway station, and who remember with what cordiality he provided for their singing-classes, soirees, and social diversions. He never lost sight of the aim of inviting them to the house of the Lord, and indeed of urging them to come personally and promptly to the Saviour. In subsequent years, as intelligence reached him of the death of one after another of those he knew here, his replies showed that during the long interval, he had borne them on his heart, and had remembered them at the throne of grace.

"When, in 1861, Mr. Corfield came again to this coast as an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Mr. Balfour had a warm welcome for him as a messenger of God; and when the proposal was, soon afterwards, made to organise a local society for

the distribution of the Holy Scriptures in all tongues, and especially in Spanish, he instantly replied, 'Let us arise and build.' About a year after this, he left for England, but his interest in the Bible-work never flagged. Remittances were sent by him from England. His firm was requested to subscribe occasionally in solid sums, for him, here. And when he returned to Chile in 1867, he laid right hold of the work with redoubled zeal, presided at the annual meetings, became President of the Society, and in all places, and with all people, pleaded for the cause, obtaining for it both funds and friends. His interest in it was undiminished to the day of his death. Thousands of dollars Mr. Balfour has placed in the treasury of this Society, which, since he helped to form it, has put into circulation sixty thousand copies of the Holy Scriptures, among the inhabitants of this Republic."

As manifesting the spirit in which his Bible-work in Valparaiso was carried on, a few sentences may be introduced from a speech delivered by Mr. Balfour as President of the Valparaiso Bible Society in the year 1868:—"It is cause for deep thankfulness that new openings for the exertions of the Committee have presented themselves, and the opportunities for usefulness in this country, by distributing the Scriptures, are now undoubtedly greater than ever. Since 1865

religious tolerance to all has become the law of this country. . . . Should it ever happen that those of the Roman Catholic persuasion dispute the propriety of our attempts to convey God's own Scriptures of truth to their fellow-countrymen now ignorant of them, we must bring before their minds the principle which has been accepted by us, and has determined our own conduct. This is, that, in circulating the Word of God, and calling the attention of individuals to its truths, we do no injury to any man, but, on the contrary, aim at distributing to others a source of light which, however inadequately we ourselves may prize it, we are nevertheless persuaded, in this world of darkness, is of unspeakable, inestimable value. We entertain hostility to no one, but would seek to be helpful to persons of every class and of all forms of religious belief. . . . May I be allowed to impress on all members of this Society, the importance of aiming that the institution shall fulfil the very highest designs and purposes? These, primarily, are, that our fellow-men shall really know God as He is revealed in His Word, and that they be led to trust, love, and serve Him. Remembering that it is declared that the justification of the sinner, in God's sight, depends on the belief he cherishes in Jesus Christ our Saviour, of what unutterable importance is it that all

shall learn of this great Saviour as He is revealed in the Bible! Every new victory gained, in the strife that is waged, will afford, to all good men in all countries, a theme for rejoicing and thanksgiving. Let us animate ourselves to needed labour by the thought that, if we are faithful to our duty, victory in the end is sure." The conviction last expressed, that every good cause was on the way to victory, was deeply stamped on his soul, and was ever an inspiration to him, filling him with patience and courage.

Dr. Trumbull continues:—"In 1867 he, with the Rev. Dr. Dennett, the Rev. Allen Gardiner, Messrs. George Jenkins, and Henry Birrell, sought to found in Valparaiso, a branch of the Young Men's Christian Association. Their efforts were not at the time carried to a successful issue. At a later period, however, the Association was founded, and a spontaneous and general sentiment demanded that Mr. Balfour, though in Europe, should be appointed the Honorary President, since his name would give prestige to the work, and stimulate young men to a kindly sympathy with the Association. He at once accepted, and has every year since that time been re-elected to the Presidency. It may be also mentioned that in Portland, Oregon, he addressed the members of the Young Men's Christian Association, pressing on their atten-

tion their personal need of an interest in the Saviour as their King and Teacher.

"He favoured schools, and gave lavishly to their initiation and maintenance, both here and in Coquimbo. Thousands of pounds sterling he devoted to our educational institutions, of the humbler and of the higher sort. To him belongs the thought, and to him the first endowment, of the Theological and Training School now located in Santiago. The English Board School at Valparaiso was a special object of his attention and generosity, his great desire in regard to it being, that its pupils should be instructed in the way of the Lord.

"For my own part, how often have I thought, What could we have done without Mr. Balfour's assistance? To me he was a brother. His generous gifts went up to thousands of dollars for the church; first, to build it; second, to maintain it; and finally, to sustain me in its ministrations. Almost never, when in town, was he absent from his place in the church. He took an active part in the devotional meetings; in prayer he was most solemn, and sometimes his words were so fraught with a spirit of seriousness, self-renunciation, and love to the Saviour, as to bear all hearts along with him in devotion and zeal.

"Mr. Balfour in numerous ways advanced the doctrine of God our Saviour. His aim was unostentatiously to let his light shine, for the honour, not of himself, but of his Heavenly Master. Perhaps no man ever resided on this coast who left a more universally favourable impression in behalf of the Gospel. Men who did not accept his views esteemed him, spoke well of him, and when he had gone away, cherished a most honourable estimate of him. His charity and complete honesty of purpose, coupled with a deeply humble dependence on, and love to his Lord and Redeemer, impressed those who came at all into intimate contact with him. We bless the Lord that, as a living epistle, a working example of faith put into practice, he ever came among us. . . . One thing certainly has been shown to the young men of this city, namely, that Christian principle can be carried into the details of commercial life, and that it is not opposed to success, but tends directly and effectively to promote it."

One fruitful friendship which Mr. Balfour formed in Chile had its origin in this wise. When about to proceed to Valparaiso he went to his bookseller's in search of books to read on the voyage. The bookseller produced the life of Captain Allen Gardiner, saying, "This, I think, will suit you." Like others

who have read it, Mr. Balfour was captivated with the book. On arriving at his destination, one of the first strangers with whom he met was another Allen Gardiner, the only son of the man whose life had so much called out his sympathies on the way. Mr. Gardiner was sent by the South American Missionary Society to the Indians of Southern Chile, but proposed first to go to Lota to look after the English and Scottish miners and their families whose spiritual need was urgent. A warm friendship sprang up at once between the two men; and Mr. Balfour became a most generous supporter of the work in Lota, where Mr. Gardiner prosecuted his laborious work as pastor, physician, and teacher.

In connection with Mr. Gardiner's work in Chile, it may be mentioned incidentally, that after the death of Mrs. Gardiner, Mr. Balfour expressed his sympathy for the bereaved husband and children, who were at that time in Australia, after his own manner. He said it was often the plan in Divine Providence to bring good out of such afflictive dispensations, and that in that respect we ought to be workers with God, for which reason he wished to aid in the education of such of the children as might be sent to England for the purpose. And aid he did, in his own princely way. He made no promise for the future, yet con-

tinued his beneficent help for a period of ten years. Mr. Gardiner, by-and-by, was also cut off, which event was a great sorrow to his friend, and called forth still stronger tokens of sympathy with the orphaned children from Mr. and Mrs. Balfour.

While occupying himself with the welfare of those around him in Chile, his interest in the progress of good work at home knew no abatement. In a letter to an aunt in Fifeshire, bearing date, Valparaiso, 12th October 1860, he says:—"I am particularly happy to hear the good news you send, and am most thankful to learn that there is so much more earnestness regarding religious things in Leven, than heretofore. It is most excellent tidings, that a lay meeting for prayer has been begun on Saturdays, and I do trust this will be warmly supported, and yet call down a blessing on the whole community." And then he turns to matters in Chile, describing the various agencies at work, and adds:—"The heart of our worthy minister, Dr. Trumbull, is cheered from time to time by hearing that this one and that one has closed in faith, with the gracious offer of reconciliation through the death of the Saviour. What a blessing to enjoy the assistance of a godly minister like Dr. Trumbull!"

Mr. Balfour's letters from Valparaiso to his friend

Mr. Robert Gibson have been preserved, and breathe the same spirit. A few brief extracts are subjoined. In a letter dated 31st December 1860 he lets us into the true and deep secret of his course of self-abnegation :—"*You* know the state of utter moral ruin and distress to which I was brought at one period, and the thought that such a creature should have had the comfort and solace which have been afforded to me, during recent months, leads to the conclusion that none need despair. I have been made to feel how utterly insignificant a life of sacrifice would be on my part, seeing mine is a life saved through mercy, from destruction. A few minutes more and the sands in the glass of the year 1860 will all have run out. . . . May we be prepared through grace, when our course is finished, to enter into the joy of our Lord."

Again he writes :—"Oh for more grace! I hardly know what is meant by a life hid with Christ in God. I suppose if God enables me, and I get the will to trample down sin and self, I shall have more conception of it."

He refers with thankfulness to the good work carried on by Mr. W. P. Lockhart and others, especially among the young men of Liverpool and Birkenhead :—"The awaking in men's hearts of

love to Christ we must regard as tidings of the last importance, and as destined to be ultimately the great regenerating influence even in earthly governments."

On the 27th October 1861 he writes :—"I am glad of your tidings respecting the school at the Dock Cottages. . . . I had a very agreeable trip to the south of Chile last month, in company with the Rev. Dr. Trumbull. We went by steamer to Talcahuano, and thence to Lota, to pay Mr. Gardiner a visit for a few days. We found his wife and him very well, and both active. He hopes by-and-by to begin itinerating amongst the Indians in Araucania. We came home by land, and our way led us within about ninety miles of a volcano which has recently burst forth in the Andes. At night, when perhaps a hundred and fifty miles from it, it looked like a watch-fire on a neighbouring hill."

During his residence at Valparaiso, Mr. Balfour continued, as we have already seen, to take a deep interest in sailors. He formed lasting friendships with many officers of Her Majesty's ships on the Pacific station. Among these may be mentioned the name of Commodore, now Admiral, Powell, who went to Valparaiso in 1867 as commander of the station, and was very often a welcome guest in the hospitable

house of Mr. and Mrs. Balfour. He had excellent opportunities of knowing Mr. Balfour at sea and among seamen. Admiral Powell writes: — "Mr. Balfour was often on board the *Topaz*, the ship I commanded, and occasionally took short trips up the coast with us. I don't think we could possibly have had a more welcome guest. His genial manner and readiness to oblige us all made him universally liked, not only on board, but wherever we went. He was known at every port, either personally or by name, and his energy and good nature in getting horses for the young officers, and conducting any expedition, were delightful to see.

"He used, when he had time, to accompany me in my visits to the different ships in the harbour of Valparaiso, and his easy way of making friends with the sailors was quite wonderful. They appeared to know instinctively how true and sincere he was; they found, to use their own language, that 'there was no humbug about him.' On board his own ships it was most pleasing to witness the respectful greetings with which the men met him, and the satisfaction they all had at seeing him. His firm were distinguished for the care they took, in many ways, of their people afloat; and the captains, to my knowledge, cordially followed the directions of their owners

in keeping Sunday, to the best of their ability, as it should be kept, &c.

"Often in the harbour we had a good deal of wind and sea to pull against, quite enough to discourage most people not accustomed to a sea life; but the more the sea washed over us, the more was Mr. Balfour, in his cheery way, bent upon going on. The sailors, of course, admired this kind of spirit in a landsman. As he was a strict disciplinarian, the men were generally in good order, without any undue pressure; and the few words of advice, which he always tendered to the men, were received with attention and respect.

"Mr. Balfour's active benevolence afloat naturally came under my notice, more than what he did on shore. But in the foreign hospitals, I found that his name was a ready passport to any favour, which I might want for our men. In our own hospitals, his kindness in visiting the sick and reading to them was often spoken of by the men themselves, in a very touching manner.

"My intimacy with Mr. Balfour and his family did not cease when they left Valparaiso; and each year increased my estimation of his marvellous energy, charity, and self-denial. I remember well a man saying to me, 'Well, really I don't think there is

another man like Mr. Balfour.' I can only say that I never met one."

Another Valparaiso friend of Mr. Balfour, a merchant, writes regarding him :—"He was in Valparaiso just the same as in Liverpool, a universal, single-hearted, large-hearted philanthropist; a splendid fellow, that set us all a great example."

Mr. Balfour was in Valparaiso on the occurrence of his thirty-eighth birthday. On that day he penned a paper of much interest as revealing the condition of his inner man. It records the heart-searching, the confession, the thanksgiving, the fresh consecration of that day. The greater portion of it is subjoined.

"*2nd September* 1862, my Birthday: am thirty-eight years of age.

CONFESSION OF MY SINS—

Of youth.
Of early manhood.
Since I have known something of God's truth.
Selfishness.
Pride.
Worship of the creature.
Want of love.

THANKSGIVING—that

God has manifested *such* patience.

He touched my heart.

He bore with me when steeped in worldliness, after naming the name of Christ.

He had compassion upon me when in the land of darkness, and in the valley and shadow of death, and has gradually brought me out into light.

He has not only taught me His secret, but has solaced me with such love to my soul as I never dreamt to have experienced.

He has put me in the position I hold, surrounded with such elements of happiness.

SUPPLICATION—

That He would not lead me into temptation, but deliver me from evil, graciously subduing the pride, covetousness, high-mindedness, and evil tempers which dwell in my soul.

That He will grant me such grace that I shall be led to hate what He hates and to love what He loves.

That He will help me to deny myself as I am required to do.



That He will bless all my relations and friends everywhere.

That He will pour out His Spirit on my own land, and on my fellow-countrymen, and on natives of this land.

That He will give wisdom to all in connection with the Church, the Bible Society, and the enterprise at Lota, causing them to pursue the very conduct agreeable to His will, and that He can bless.

That He will lead me through life, so that I may live agreeably to His will, in the calling, and obeying the directions, He appoints.

That He will prepare me for death, so that I may be ready and willing to go when He shall summon me.—A. BALFOUR."

The seriousness of deep spiritual exercise, like that of which we have just given the birthday record, did not interfere with the bright and elastic joyousness that was natural to him; nay, rather it lent intensity to that joyousness. "God has brought me out into light. He has solaced me with love to my soul." Why should he not be glad? Who has such cause to rejoice as those who, like him, are living in hal-

lowed friendship with God, and who, as they look on the beauty of His wonderful works, can say—

"My Father made them all"?

It would be well for the spread of heart-religion if we oftener saw, combined in the same man, the evidences of deep devotion and of overflowing gladness of heart.

It was but a week or two after this memorable birthday that, in company with his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Williamson, he set off on a visit to Santiago, the beautiful capital of Chile. This visit occurred a few months before his return to England. The party extended their journey southward through the fertile valley of Santiago, as far as San Fernando, spending a day with a Chilian gentleman and his wife, near the lovely lake of Aculeo. Mr. Balfour was in the highest spirits; he revelled in the magnificent scenery through which their journey lay, both in going and returning, and the sunshine that gleamed along the heights and hollows of the broad mountain, or played on the surface of the dimpled lake, seemed to mingle with the sunshine of his own rejoicing heart.

The party had to pass over the "Cuesta" of the coast-range of the Cordilleras. There, on the return journey to Valparaiso, occurred an incident which

brought into marked relief some features of his character. Observing some beautiful wild-flowers on a bank by the roadside, and desiring to pluck them for Mrs. Williamson, he sprang hastily from the carriage when it was in motion. Unfortunately his leg became entangled in the wheel, and received so severe a wrench, as to cause him great agony. He became faint and pallid, but as the carriage approached Casa Blanca, where Mrs. Beatty, an English lady whom they purposed to visit, was then residing, he somewhat recovered, and the pain was considerably relieved. He thereupon insisted that his fellow-travellers should not so much as mention the accident to their friend, and gave them clearly to understand, that if this were not agreed to, he would not go to Mrs. Beatty's house. His condition being, per force, accepted, the intended visit was paid, and during the hour or two of its continuance, Mr. Balfour patiently endured the lessened, though still severe, pain resulting from the wrench. He would not suffer any reference to his physical distress to mar the pleasure of his friends. there was self-will in his persistence, there was also that self-abnegation which, deeply seated in his nature, characterised him through all the course of his life.

When in the capital, Mr. Balfour, as was his habit

everywhere, manifested a warm interest in the evangelical work that was carried on there. The visit occurred during the season of the national festival, the "*diez y ocho*" (18th September). On Sunday, which was the great day for military reviews and promenades, the party went to the humble little Protestant chapel in the Alameda, where they joined a very small company of worshippers. As they returned to their hotel, they met a native lady with whom they were well acquainted, setting out in her carriage to the review ground, the *Campo de Marte*. She courteously invited them to accompany her. Mr. Balfour explained that they were unable to accept her most kind invitation, it being Sunday. The lady drove off with a smile, saying in good-natured banter, as she waved her adieus, that they were "*Puritanos, frescos de Escocia.*" In his conscientious practice of devoting the Lord's Day to its highest and most sacred purposes, Mr. Balfour wavered not, in any country or under any clime. Chile would not be the worse, nor would the world, of more *Puritanos* after the manner of Mr. Balfour.

At the proper time and place, he could throw himself with all his heart into the enjoyment of exercise, amidst blithe company, under the beautiful skies of Chile. The tastes he had acquired, in the days

when he wandered about the bracing shores of Fifeshire on his shaggy pony, had not forsaken him. A correspondent speaks of the hearty enjoyment, with which he entered into what appears to be a common holiday amusement, among the English community in Valparaiso. Fifty or sixty ladies and gentlemen will start for a day's gallop with the hounds over the breezy hills, in the exhilarating air and under the brilliant climate of a Southern winter. In such expeditions Mr. Balfour used to take part, and as the cavalcade dashed forward he would say, "Ah, this is the thing to blow away the cobwebs! The horses enjoy it, and the dogs enjoy it, and even the little fox—well, he is, perhaps, not much the worse for the fright we are giving him!" It must be confessed that the nature of the country about Valparaiso, and the dry air and herbage, which cannot long retain the scent, were favourable to the fox, who seldom had much more than a fright to complain of.

Mr. Balfour's attitude towards sport may be inferred from an incident which occurred when he was, at one time, looking out for a summer residence for his family in the Highlands of Scotland with a shooting attached to it. He had nearly decided on one place that was offered him, when a friend who knew

it, called to warn him that he feared the moor was not over well stocked, and that he and his guests might find their exertions in pursuit of game, more notable than the size of their bag. "So much the better," he said, laughing, "so much the better," and decided to take the place.

It may be mentioned that on his return from Valparaiso in 1868, Mr. Balfour, "on hospitable thoughts intent," took for the season, Islay House and its extensive shootings in the island of Islay, with the object of entertaining his numerous friends, and giving them a taste of Highland sport. Here, as elsewhere, his poorer neighbours had reason to rejoice at his advent, and many were the bales of blankets distributed amongst the crofters and cottagers on the Islay estate. Strong as was his relish for the moor and the stream, he had a still deeper delight in the company of his friends, and in gladdening lives less favoured than his own.



CHAPTER XII.

PALESTINE.

" By cool Siloam's shady rill
How sweet the lily grows ;
How sweet the breath beneath the hill
Of Sharon's dewy rose ! "

—HEBER.

" What was any scene on earth in comparison with the one which we were about to gaze on ! Every face was turned towards Jerusalem. The round hill dotted with trees, the dome beneath, the few minarets near it—there were Olivet and Jerusalem. No words were spoken, no exclamations heard, when we saw for the first time, the city of the Great King."

—NORMAN MACLEOD.

CHAPTER XII.

PALESTINE.

IN the spring of 1882 Mr. Balfour, in company with Mr. Bushell, Dr. Howson, the late Dean of Chester, Archdeacon Gore, the Rev. J. W. Diggle, and others, paid a visit to the Holy Land. His brief notes testify to his great enjoyment of the scenes in the midst of which our Lord and the apostles walked and worked, but they afford no continuous narrative. Yet, a few memoranda from his journal, and reminiscences from the pens of fellow-travellers, will not be without interest.

"*Beyrout, May* 8. To Mrs. Mott's, to gathering of the children attending the Syrian schools, at nine in the morning. About nine hundred and twenty children present, seated on benches along the walks. . . . I gave Mrs. Mott £100 for the schools, for which she was most grateful. Then, with the Bishop (of Gibraltar) and Mr. Bushell, went to German Hospital, which is under charge of the Kaiserswerth sisters.

It is a fine building, a model of comfort and order. The Doctor accompanied us to the American College, where Dr. Bliss was ready to receive us. He took us over the three buildings, in the fine grounds possessed by the College: all are simple in their character, but sufficient and effective. The lads are almost all from the humbler classes. The cost of maintaining a student is fifteen or sixteen pounds a year. I asked Dr. Bliss the capital sum required to endow a scholarship, and finding that £250 would suffice, I decided to found one as a thank-offering for recent great mercies; and I decided to give £100 to Dr. Jessup, toward the work of the American Mission to the Syrians. At the hotel found Dr. Bliss waiting for me, to whom I gave cheques. Felt thankful for the opportunity of thus helping Christian workers."

The following brief memorandum of the journey is from the pen of the Venerable Archdeacon Gore:—

"Mr. Balfour was one, and in some ways the chief one, in a party of eight, who journeyed *viâ* Cairo to and through Palestine. What is desired here, is not to record anything like an account of the tour, but to mention some incidents characteristic of the man.

"Generally speaking, his companions all noticed two attributes conspicuously—his absolutely un-

wavering faith and his perfect unselfishness. Both qualities were on one occasion illustrated in a remarkable way. At Bethlehem, on the last night in March, a very violent storm occurred. The tents gave way under the severity of the wind—the rain fell in torrents; but Mr. Balfour was, though not the youngest, certainly the foremost, to encounter the elements in their fury. Regardless of his own comfort, he was everywhere to be found labouring to strengthen the tent-pegs himself, and by his presence of mind he steadied and guided the exertions of others. The Syrian servants especially were recovered from panic, by his perfect coolness. But all the while, his confidence was not in man's strength or labour. At the first moment possible, he summoned all to prayer, and when the storm abated he failed not to add the word of thanksgiving. There was no doubt on his mind, that the winds and the waves were obedient to the God who heareth and answereth prayer.

"He did not seem to have the eager desire for seeing the usual objects and places of interest, which possesses ordinary travellers. His first inquiry was invariably for schools or other institutions, where anything was being done or attempted for the welfare, particularly the spiritual welfare, of the people. More

interesting than mosques or dervishes, than the Church of the Nativity, or of the Holy Sepulchre, or of the Annunciation, were, in his view, Miss Whately's school at Cairo, and Bishop Gobat's at Jerusalem, and Miss Dickson's Orphanage for Syrian girls at Nazareth. And there can be no doubt, that the whole party owed much to him, for persistently bringing into notice this element of real and abiding interest, wherever it was to be found. He was not indiscriminate in his approval of all that he saw. He had a clear head and sound judgment, as well as a warm heart. He could see defects as well as merits; but when he did approve, he gave practical effect to his approval by rendering most substantial help. Thus at Nazareth, he provided permanently for the education of one orphan, and he connected his gift with the name of his own daughter, that she might hear of, and be interested always, in her far-away sister. At Beyrout, he founded a scholarship in the American College or University, after he had accurately investigated the character of the education given. And, in like manner, wherever a Bible Depôt or mission work of any kind was found, he had a ready ear to listen and an anxious desire to understand, and a bountiful hand to promote the good work. Indeed he was abroad just the same man as

at home. He seemed rather the steward and dispenser, than the personal possessor of his wealth.

"Two of the party were young men, one recently ordained, the other preparing for the ministry of the Church of England. Though not himself a member of their Church, Mr. Balfour became their warmest friend, and won their respect and admiration in a remarkable way. He spoke to them with the utmost freedom and with the deepest earnestness. His anxiety was manifest, to promote the value and success of their ministry. The writer has often heard them both express deep thankfulness, that they had been brought to familiar acquaintance with such a single-minded servant of God.

"The attribute of unselfishness, of which mention has been made, was plainly the result of Christian grace. It was self-sacrifice. Self was nowhere in his esteem. His only thought was how, by word and deed, he might serve others."

The young clergyman above referred to writes:—"His whole life was bound up with his religion, and yet no life could have been brighter or more cheerful. His religion was his life; his life was his religion. Almost his last words to me, as he shook me by the hand, were 'Preach Christ.'"

A pencil jotting in Mr. Balfour's journal is as

follows:—"*Athens, May* 18, 1882. I entreated young ——— and ——— to preach Christ; they were very kind and nice indeed."

The following brief but graphic sketches are from the pen of the Rev. J. W. Diggle of Liverpool:—

"There were not many remarkable incidents during the tour; it was a season of sacred refreshment, rather than of remarkable events. Two incidents, however, remain clear in my memory.

"The first is connected with our visit to the Jordan. I can never forget how he stood in the rushing stream, and with intense solemnity dipped himself seven times, saying, 'I have a leprosy worse than the leprosy of Naaman: Lord, wash me and make me clean.'

"The second incident is connected with our visit to the Garden of Gethsemane, upon the Thursday night in Passion Week. It was about ten o'clock at night, and the Paschal moon was shining in silver glory, from out a cloudless sky, while we held a memorial service beneath one of the olive-trees, upon the slope sacred to the redeeming agony. The scripture was read: 'O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, Thy will be done.' It is impossible to describe the look which shone through his face as these words were read: it seemed like the splendour of self-submission."

Mr. Diggle thus writes to Mr. Bushell of their fellow-traveller:—"Sympathy was amazingly developed in him. He was also intense. To me it often seemed remarkable that, with all his intensity and concentration of energy, he was yet so broad and manifold in his interests. To most men, manifoldness of interest brings with it superficiality of interest. It was not so with our friend. His tremendous intensity enabled him to have many irons in the fire, and yet to keep them every one from burning.

"And his sympathy was not emotion; it was action. What he felt he did. It was this habit of converting emotion into action which made him the practical man he was. He was not a mere visionary. He was an instance of character very rarely found: he was an enthusiast, yet a practical man.

"Above all things, 'his life was hid in God.' 'He set the Lord always before him.' This was the secret of his fearlessness. He did not fear man at all, because he altogether feared God. This was the secret of his devotion to temperance, to education, to missions among seamen, &c., &c. 'He did all to the glory of God.' This, too, was the secret spring of his munificence. He felt his money was not his but God's. . . . He was overpowered with the hallowed associations of Bethlehem, of Nazareth, of the Sea of

Galilee. His whole nature seemed to be penetrated with God. 'He walked with God.' 'God was in all his thoughts.'

"It was this devotion to the Divine, which made him so strong and sweet an influence, to those who were privileged to come into contact with him. Sometimes his very face seemed to me to shine with a supernal light."



CHAPTER XIII.

JOTTINGS FROM JOURNALS.

"A life is formed in solitude; a character in the stream of the world."—GOETHE.

"Jesus, Master, whom I serve,
Though so feebly and so ill,
Strengthen hand and heart and nerve
All Thy bidding to fulfil;
Open Thou mine eyes to see
All the work Thou hast for me."
—FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

"Charge them that are rich in this present world . . . that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves, a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed."
—1 TIM. vi. 17–19. R. V.

CHAPTER XIII.

JOTTINGS FROM JOURNALS.

MR. BALFOUR, as we have seen, was little given to speaking about his motives or the springs of his actions. We saw the life and we inferred the source. In such a case, however, any written revelations of what passed within him, are of value, especially for the sake of those who did not know the man. Mr. Balfour did not keep any regular or extended journal; but a number of little annual volumes remain, giving his pencil-jottings, so far as he made them, from day to day. Occasionally these jottings swell into some fulness, but generally they are very brief, and they are often intermitted for a length of time. When journeying by land or sea he was usually more careful, briefly to note passing events and passing thoughts. From these jottings, where not of a nature too private for publication, we cull a few extracts which illustrate his character and

indicate his motives. The years are mentioned, not always the day or month.

"1863. Urged Mr. —— to ask direction and help in business from the Lord." "—— told me that he had this night found rest to his soul in believing."

"Waited with deputation on the Earl of Ellesmere, regarding Sunday work at Bridgewater Canal."

"*September* 5, *Sunday.* At Westward-Ho. Most precious reading of Scripture (2 Cor. v.) with —— and —— on the rise of hill near top; prayed that Jesus might seal instruction with His blessing."

1871. Diary supplies touching details of visits paid with the Rev. Drummond Anderson, chaplain of the Seamen's Orphanage, to the homes of widows whose husbands had lately perished at sea. Incidents like the following are given:—"Dinner of potatoes and dripping; the dresses of the girls and the mother in pawn for food." "Sold an eight-day clock and bought a few groceries: all house clean." Thus visiting the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, he was spurred on to ever-increasing effort in behalf of the Seamen's Orphanage.

This year he sailed to Spain, and during the passage the following entries occur:—"Prayer for

mind of Jesus Christ (Psalm xxv. 6, 7). Prayer for family blessings; prayer for help for seamen, for Mr. ——, for Chile, for Spain, for personal friends." "Rose at six in the morning; have tried to lay *all* (oh how many many they are!) my sins on Jesus." "Spoke to second-class passengers; went to fore-castle."

"1872. Prayer that heart of —— be led to give. Prayer for Mrs. Birt's work. Prayer for consolation to Mr. and Mrs. —— in their trial. Prayer regarding Sunday closing of public-houses. Prayer for acceptance by Christian friends of proposal for united prayer." Thus were all his doings mingled with prayer. One page contains a long list of gifts, from 2000 dollars and downwards, for beneficent and Christian efforts chiefly in Chile, such as "Union Church," "Escuela Popular," "Valparaiso Bible Society," "Hospital," &c.

1873. On April 20th he has a list of topics of prayer which indicate the subjects of his constant thoughts, and show how all were humbly brought to the throne of grace. "Prayer for Orphanage,—that out-door relief may be continued. Prayer for Ragged School Union. Prayer for Y. M. C. A. Prayer for grace to consecrate money." It were well if the last of these petitions were widely offered through the

Church of Christ. Then would the treasury of the Lord be full, and He would surely pour us out a blessing.

In a letter to his mother, written from the Engadine, 26th September 1873, Mr. Balfour gives a description of his journey by the Julier Pass. In it he says:—"Leaving Bovia, which is 5800 feet above the level of the sea, the road still ascends till you reach the summit of the Pass, which is 7500 feet above sea-level, and where you find two round pillars standing, which, it is said, one of the Roman generals placed there. By the time I had got there—for I walked on before the carriage—the sun had set, and the snow-summits all round were being faintly lighted by the new moon, which appeared as a slender crescent. There was scarcely a breath of wind, and the whole scene was comforting and inspiring. I was glad to think that the Saviour, who had formed these mountains, was near to bless me and each of His people. At what I thought was the highest point of the Pass, I knelt to thank God for His goodness, and to beseech Him for His grace to myself and others."

With this extract may be fittingly associated a jotting from his diary, in which he describes his descent on another occasion from the Piz Julier by

a steep and rugged path:—"Leaning always *to* the rock, not away from it, and taking support from the alpenstock, I was much reminded of the Psalmist's words, 'Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me;' and so I reached the bottom safely."

"1874. *Sunday, June* 21. Thanks for £100 to Council of Education by ——. Thanks for Report by Royal Commission on Shipping." Often was the desire of his heart granted him, and it would seem never without his grateful acknowledgment to the Giver of all good things.

"*September* 13. Confession of unbelief and disobedience. Prayer for contrition and forgiveness. Prayer for consecration of all I have to the Lord. Prayer for denial of self, and sin, and world. Prayer that —— and —— may make the surrender of themselves to the Lord, and that their voyage may be blest."

"*September* 30. Seamen's Orphanage opened by H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh. The ceremony a great success, for which thanks to God."

"*October* 11. Prayer for help for meeting regarding plurality of licenses to-morrow. Prayer for help for Permissive Bill Anniversary at Manchester on Tuesday. Prayer for help for Y. M. C. A. with Lord Shaftesbury."

On November 3rd we find the solitary entry, "Prayer for wisdom and strength to testify at Town Council to-morrow, against electing publicans to be Aldermen." When on such subjects Mr. Balfour came into sharp collision with opponents, it would scarcely be conjectured by them, from what source this fearless man had drawn his courage and power. Again, "Thanksgiving for progress towards getting Messrs. Moody and Sankey for Liverpool. Thanksgiving for our children's behaviour." So were public and private matters blended in his thoughts and prayers.

1875. On his way to Gothenburg with his friend, Mr. Clarke Aspinall, the Coroner of Liverpool: "Oh that from this day my life may be one of absolute trust in, and obedience to my Lord and Saviour. Alas! my unbelief and disobedience, which I deplore, and the consequences of which I must ever mourn."

Throughout the year there are brief references to a variety of matters which greatly engrossed him. Discussion ran high in the Town Council on questions of temperance and social order, and Mr. Balfour found the closet the best preparation for public conflict. One of his earliest and dearest friends was involved to a frightful extent, in the crash occasioned

by the collapse in the affairs of Messrs. A. C—— & Co. He offered princely financial help, and week after week breathed earnest prayers and "entreaties" for his friend in the midst of his disasters. Messrs. Moody and Sankey, at the invitation of himself and other Christian men, were brought to Liverpool; he watched over their efforts with intense solicitude, and hope, and gratitude as the time went on. We well remember a prayer offered by Mr. Balfour at the opening of the great wooden structure erected for Mr. Moody, and known as Victoria Hall, in which he besought the Lord that, "as Liverpool had been known as the 'Black Spot on the Mersey,' it might, through the concentration of Christian effort upon it, become the Bright Spot on the Mersey; and that, as it had been a by-word because of prevailing evil, it might become an example of good among cities, and a praise in the land." His whole soul was poured into that prayer.

Such entries as the following are scattered through the diary of 1875 :—

"*May* 30, *Sunday.* Entreaty that honey may be eaten out of the slain lion of disobedience and unbelief. Prayer for state of mind such that God can use me to speak in Council on 2d June."

"*May* 31. Went with —— and —— to visit

public-houses in Williamson Square and round Sailors' Home. Inspector says that for twenty years there has been no such interruption to drinking, as there has been since Mr. Moody's meetings began."

"Prayer for wisdom on Tuesday at deputation to Home Office."

"*June* 18. —— —— awaiting me in the office with tidings of his fearful involvement with A. C—— and Co. . . . I wrote letter offering to pay ultimately £—— to the deficit."

"*June* 20, *Sunday.* Prayer that God would mercifully interfere in ——'s behalf" (the friend named above), "and in some way deliver him, to the praise of His name."

"*June* 27, *Sunday.* Entreaty for direction regarding ——'s affairs" (the same friend). "Prayer for direction and help regarding Victoria Hall.* Thanks for word of the Saviour, so realised to-day at communion; heard His still kind whisper, 'Tis for *thee.*'"

"*July* 4, *Sunday.* Thanks for help to purchasing Victoria Hall. Prayer for help to get money for Victoria Hall. Prayer for direction regarding —— ——'s whole concerns, personal and business."

"*July* 23. Victoria Hall paid for."

* The great wooden hall, erected in Liverpool for Messrs. Moody and Sankey.

"*August* 11, *Sunday.* Thanks for funds for purchase of Victoria Hall; for Convention and farewell address in Victoria Hall on the 3rd."

"*November* 7. Prayer for help from God to prepare for meeting of temperance friends, Magistrates, and others, at the Adelphi Hotel to-morrow, for preparation of their hearts and mine from God Himself; entreaty for His great blessing on the gathering. Prayer for help for Y. M. C. A. affairs; for direction as to going to Liverpool for winter."

"*November* 21. Prayer for God's own Spirit to fill me, that I may be able to write pamphlet,* entirely according to His will. O God, give me facts and opinions, and power to express them."

"*December* 19. Prayer for God's Spirit that I may write the thoughts He gives me, and these only. O God, for Thy help!"

"1877. *January* 14. Prayer that the heart of Mr. ——" (the opulent owner of numerous licensed places), "may be turned to close public-houses on Sundays; that God may guide and help meetings of Church of England Temperance Society. Prayer for Mrs. Birt. Thanksgiving for successful meetings of Council of Education, of Temperance Society, of Cocoa-room opening. Prayer for blessing on words spoken at

* On temperance-reform.

above meetings. Prayer for help regarding Mersey Mission, Y. M. C. A., Apprentices' Home."

"1882. *Bucharest, May* 29. Fine and tasteful city; no squalor, no appearance of poverty. What a contrast to our own!"

"*Bonn, June* 4. Dr. Christlieb told me of opportunity to buy Presbyterian church, as Dr. Graham is retiring. Promised Dr. Christlieb £100 toward the purchase."

CHAPTER XIV.

CLOSING DAYS.

"Yes, the bright things which gild earth's lowering day
Still shine the brighter ere they fade away:
As if, when verging on a lovelier sphere,
Some portion of its radiance reached them here."

—L. EVANS.

"Life's short enough for labour,
By which the world is blest;
Eternity is peaceful
And long enough, for rest."

—OLD POEM.

"Life is the Christian's in a far higher and fuller sense than it is the worldly man's, since he enjoys it on a far higher level of blessedness, and uses it in a much nobler cause. Even death is his, since, though for a moment it triumphs over him, in the end he triumphs over it, and while he seems to yield to it, he treads it under his feet."—BISHOP THOROLD.

CHAPTER XIV.

CLOSING DAYS.

FOR most of what is contained in this chapter we are indebted to Dr. Robert Roxburgh, brother-in-law of Mr. Balfour, who, being with him, had special opportunities of knowing his mind and bearing, during his closing days. He says :—"Sanguine and impetuous natures sometimes, under special strain, become clouded over with a gloom that is all the deeper because it is unwonted. According to the size and wealth of a man's soul, are his capacities for joy and grief, for hope and discouragement. So also the most saintly and faithful of mankind are permitted at times to pass through depths of spiritual conflict and sorrow, to which those whose devotion is less real and ardent are strangers. Religious biography abounds in illustrations of this, and experiences such as Bunyan has recorded of himself are not without parallel, in the history of all to whom spiritual things have been as vividly real as they were to Bunyan.

"In 1885 Mr. Balfour underwent such a period of eclipse. The general commercial depression of that and the immediately preceding years had obliged him to limit the number of benefactions, which it was his delight to bestow on multitudinous objects dear to him, and seemed to his eager mind to hamper the development of those large schemes of benevolence which he loved to plan or to help. Probably he exaggerated to himself the fear that his usefulness might be seriously impaired, and his enthusiasm suffered a check. Other obscure influences may also have been at work, in giving his mind a morbid set. He began to lose the filial confidence and sense of the Divine favour, which were indispensable to him. With painful probings of conscience, he searched his heart for the sin which he thought must be lurking there, and averting from him the countenance of his Father in heaven.

"In this connection it may be noted that Mr. Balfour's faith was of a peculiarly realistic type. He was quite untouched by those present-day tendencies which minimise the conception of a personal Deity, and under the domination of scientific ideas of force, create one that is vague and far distant. As in the saints of patriarchal times, reference to the will of God was a daily, hourly habit with him. He was wont

to read the Divine purposes in the every-day circumstances of life, and perhaps he fell into the error of a too great readiness, to connect external events with inferences as to God's favour or displeasure. When, therefore, the bright vision which was his constant inspiration, became veiled, and 'the heavens,' as he then expressed it, 'became as brass,' he was plunged into the deepest dejection. Conversing with him, I suggested that physical conditions probably underlay the mental troubles he was enduring. He strenuously opposed this view, declaring that, so far as bodily well-being was concerned, he was absolutely free from any trace of ill-health. The sequel hardly bore out this opinion, but he maintained it unchanged till the last. While repudiating the shallow materialism, which would attempt to explain all such mysterious moral conditions, by a reference to physical fact alone, and while convinced that Heaven-taught natures are the scene of moral conflicts, surprises, defeats, and victories which lie beyond the horizon of the unregenerate and earthly man, we have yet to acknowledge that in the strange interworkings of body and mind, these very struggles may take origin, which are pregnant with moral results to the individual soul.

"In September of the same year, Mr. Balfour became affected with symptoms which gave rise to anxiety in

regard to his health. It was considered advisable that he should consult Sir Henry Thompson in London; and a characteristic episode occurred during that gentleman's visit to him. Mr. Balfour was at that time much engrossed with the subject of a cheap and pure milk-supply for the poorer inhabitants of our large towns. Sir Henry is a well-known authority on matters of diet. He had to put Mr. Balfour under chloroform, in order to make the requisite exploration for what, it was feared, might be a dangerous source of mischief. His astonishment may be pictured when, on recovering from the anæsthetic, his patient did not stop to ask one question about the complaint, or the surgeon's discoveries, but at once launched forth on the subject of milk, eagerly seizing the opportunity to enlist the medical man's interest in the matter, and to secure his authority for his own views! The assistant who stood by whispered to Mrs. Balfour, 'Not out of the chloroform yet;'—he was not accustomed to the sight of patients who treated their ailments with such serene indifference.

"It will be observed that the spiritual depression, under which Mr. Balfour was then labouring, did not hinder him in his continuous plans and efforts for the benefit of others, nor could he bear to think that business

depression should cripple the many institutions which depended on his pecuniary support. Though at times walking in utter darkness of soul, he would not give way to self-absorption, nor relax his vigilance over the wants of his fellows. He still accounted himself but the steward of his possessions, and if current income did not meet the extent of his benevolent impulses, he still had capital to fall back upon."

His condition of mind is portrayed by himself, in a letter addressed to his partner, Mr. Williamson, bearing date, Mount Alyn, 15th February 1885 :—

"You have rendered me another true kindness in having written me as you have done, when sending me the reflection of Thomas à Kempis. The distress and suffering I endure, from a sense of the withdrawment of God's favour and help, I cannot find language to express, and my inability to be helpful to others; it is beyond my power to portray. You write as if other people had suffered as I do, and that from their minds God had been pleased to lift the cloud after a time. Will you pray for me that this may occur to me. In God's grace and mercy is my only hope. The lines are continually coming into my mind—

> 'Where is the blessedness I knew
> When first I saw the Lord?'

and I can only trust that former convictions may

come back to me. Like the Psalmist, I most earnestly desire to wait on the Lord. Of His goodness and righteousness I am fully aware in all His dealings with myself, but His mercy is what I absolutely stand in need of. I shall do my best to put away from my mind moodiness and doubt. I cannot believe I have cherished these from mere mental speculations, but wave on wave of trouble has come on me, and I have been obliged to reflect as to what all this can mean. I shall do my best to follow your advice. Excuse these sad thoughts from your affectionate friend, A. BALFOUR."

Often the darkest hour is just before the dawn of day. By-and-by a change set in, which Mr. Balfour received with thankful heart, as a precious and undeserved gift from his Heavenly Father.

"In a letter dated 28th November 1885," continues Dr. Roxburgh, "after referring to the announcement that his friend, Mr. Samuel Smith, had lost his seat for Liverpool, an event which he describes as 'a calamity to the town, and a great discouragement,' as 'he was doing a work in Parliament on behalf of poor children, and in favour of social reform generally, that was unique of its kind,' he goes on to say:—'I know that you will join with me in deep thankfulness that

the dark cloud under which for so many months I lived, is, through God's mercy, I humbly believe, passing away, and that I am again allowed to take my place at the feet of the Saviour, a sinner—a forgiven sinner. Everything is beginning to be different, and I never can be grateful enough to sovereign goodness and grace.' Again, on the 31st December he writes:—'. . . Meanwhile I want to write a line or two which may serve as conveying our benedictions on your mother and the household, as one year closes and another opens. Please thank your mother warmly for writing me as she has done, and assure her that her words and her example give the strongest support to some of us, who have not had such full experience of the sufficiency of God's grace for every circumstance of our lives, as she has had. I wish you all to know, that the sympathy and prayers I know I had during my dark days from you all, were of incalculable value to me. I trust the affliction I passed through had, as one effect, the breaking down to the ground much in me that was displeasing to God. I have sought to lie at His feet, in the dust, and to remain there. I too would now "sing of mercy" as well as "of judgment."' These touching utterances from one who was both lion-hearted and transparently sincere in every word, are surely

evidence of high attainment in that very 'growth in grace' for which he so earnestly longed. Cheered by new revelations of the sufficiency of God for every need, he threw himself into the winter's work, and as the doctors disapproved of the daily journey from the country, he took a house in town, to be near the friends and the labours most congenial to him."

One interesting circumstance should be mentioned, in connection with the removal of the cloud of spiritual depression which hung so darkly over him. Years before, he had been in the habit of attending the annual meetings of the Mildmay Conference. He greatly valued them, and wished others to participate in the benefit. Accordingly, at a fitting time, he put a cheque into the hands of various ministers and friends, and warmly invited them to go to London to attend the Conference, in the hope that they might catch something of the Christian warmth and enthusiasm which prevailed. On their return, he proposed the establishing of a Liverpool "Christian Convention," founded somewhat on the same model. The plan was cordially entered into and carried out. A Convention is held each October in Hope Hall, Liverpool, Mr. Balfour's friend, Mr. Thomas Matheson, being chairman of the Committee of Arrangement. Mr. Balfour delighted in these meetings. He was present

at the Convention in October 1885, and it seems to have been there and then that the dark cloud rifted, and the smile of his Heavenly Father's countenance was seen again. Thus did that Convention, of which he was the chief promoter, for the good of the community, become a well-spring of water to his own thirsty soul. The burden fell from his shoulders. For what he had done for others, the Lord rewarded him into His own bosom. He stayed, on the occasion referred to, with the present writer, and it was delightful to see refreshment fall upon him, like rain upon the mown grass. The joy and blessing of restoration to peace, and to a lively sense of his Redeemer's favour, were to him beyond all price. They returned to him gradually, but the first dawn was now.

"Henceforth," Dr. Roxburgh continues, "his mental peace was unclouded, and his useful activity unceasing; and no one who looked upon his lithe, agile figure, and came under the spell of his inspiring presence and genial smile, could have guessed that his earthly course was nearly run, and that, while to outward seeming, he was instinct with bodily energy, the seeds were already germinating of the disease which was to lay its swift arrest upon his beneficent career.

"In the beginning of March of the following year, 1886, while staying in bed for a slight cold, he was discovered by the medical man in attendance to be the subject of an internal growth, which had already assumed very serious dimensions, and which was of a peculiarly threatening character. This insidious malady, as was now clearly proved, had given rise to the symptoms before alluded to, although its presence had not been suspected. A consultation was immediately decided on. Four medical men were present, and the spokesman having candidly pronounced what was almost equivalent to a sentence of death, Mr. Balfour received the statement in silence, and without the slightest disquietude. After a moment's pause, he said, 'Well, Doctor, that is an announcement that must come to each of us sooner or later. The great thing is, that it should find us resting on the Rock of our salvation.' When the doctors were gone, and he was left alone with his wife, whose distress was too deep for speech, after a time of silent and deep emotion, he recovered himself, and said, 'I must communicate at once with Samuel Smith about the Y. M. C. A. They may need another trustee.' Even at that solemn crisis the service of God and of man was uppermost in his thoughts.

"Those only, who have lived through similar experiences, can imagine the crushing weight of anxiety which now fell upon those nearest and dearest to Mr. Balfour, or can picture their intense desire to cling to every shred of hope, and appeal to every human resource which pointed even to the possibility of recovery. The tidings soon spread to those with whom he had been specially associated in good works, and came upon many with the weight of a stunning blow. 'We could spare any one better than him,' was the ejaculation of hearts wrung with grief and astonishment. Then it was that those who had been leaning on him, as on a rock, who had been cheered on by the sunshine of his smile, and moved by the talisman of his deep and warm sympathy, began to realise how much he was to them, and how unspeakably poorer the world would be without him. Special meetings were held in many quarters for intercession that a life so precious might yet be preserved. Private prayers of deep earnestness were offered up in many a household throughout the country where his name was revered, though in some he was personally unknown, and hope, bred of desire, began to be entertained, that something might yet be done to avert the impending blow.

"The result of the consultation already referred to

was a resolution to obtain the opinion of Dr. Thomas Keith, the eminent Edinburgh surgeon, as to the possibility of a remedial operation, and a journey to Edinburgh was accordingly undertaken. Most happily, the malady was wholly unattended with suffering, and interfered in a very slight degree with Mr. Balfour's customary activity. This was a cause of special thankfulness, as he was of peculiarly sensitive organisation, and could hardly bear either to suffer severe physical pain himself, or to hear about it in others. He had, indeed, an exceptional dislike to all subjects of conversation bearing, however distantly, on bodily suffering, a fact which rendered the more remarkable his perfect composure in the prospect of a dangerous operation. When in Edinburgh, he unburdened himself daily to God in prayer, seeking only that His will should be done, and that a right decision should be arrived at; and having thus cast his care upon God, he seemed to take no further thought on the matter. Those who then enjoyed the privilege of very intimate communion with him can never forget that spectacle of childlike faith and Christian heroism. His thoughtfulness for others, even in the minutest details, and his entire unconsciousness of self, were associated with a docility and gentleness which, in one of such forcible and commanding will, were

singularly lovely. A divine peace seemed to possess the man, and the glory of heaven was already irradiating his brow.

"After several anxious interviews, Dr. Keith pronounced that the risk of operating would be so serious that, on his own responsibility, he could not incur it. While fully convinced that without an operation death was inevitable, he yet hesitated to plunge such a man as he saw before him into extreme and immediate danger. His advice was, that the greatest surgical authority in the country, Sir James Paget, should be asked to give the final decision, Dr. Keith agreeing to abide by it, whatever it might be. This counsel, though it prolonged the period of suspense, was so manifestly generous and wise, that it was at once followed.

"A circumstance clings to my memory in connection with the journey to London. When we left Edinburgh, Dr. Keith happened to be travelling by the same train to Cumberland. Mr. Balfour had observed him drive up to the station, and immediately invited him to travel in our carriage. "Just look at Alexander!" exclaimed my sister; and there I saw him, as if in the days of full health, carrying Dr. Keith's valise to the railway carriage. His old instinct for giving help would take no denial.

"The result of our visit to London was that, after careful deliberation, Sir James Paget advised the operation, as offering the only alternative to certain, and probably painful, death. On the receipt of this judgment, Dr. Keith wrote to me:—'Now that I am away from the personal influence of Mr. Balfour, I quite agree that it should be done.' The integrity and kindness of both these distinguished men were deeply felt by Mr. Balfour, and their agreeing in opinion was a source of much satisfaction to him.

"From this time forward he preserved the habitual calm and cheerfulness of ordinary life. A few minutes after the crucial judgment had been given by Sir. J. Paget, he accompanied one or two near friends to the exhibition of Holman Hunt's pictures then being held in Bond Street. One of the party afterwards said, 'I remember how he stood before "The Light of the World," with the light of another world reflected on his face. I felt that heaven was very near.' The day was stormy and cold, and he was repeatedly heard to deplore that a friend, who was to cross the Channel that day from the Continent, should have such trying weather. His friend's welfare appeared to be present to his mind much more than his own destiny."

The following brief extracts from letters written by

Mr. Balfour during his illness, and some of them on the very brink of eternity, to Mr. Christopher Bushell, will serve to illustrate the unruffled tranquillity of his spirit and his unwavering trust in his Saviour.

"BELLEVUE, PRINCE'S PARK, LIVERPOOL,
January 2, 1886.

"Having been out of sorts for a little while back, I have not been regularly at business, and have not been across to see you; but you know how much I desire that you should both be well and in the enjoyment of every blessing, now and always. We have had the boys at home from school, which has kept the house lively, and we have had a quiet and happy Christmas with them and the little ones, who, I am thankful to say, are all well. I often look back on our Christmas last year, with the illnesses which our children then had, and contrast that dark time with the brightness and tranquillity we now enjoy, so that if any one should sing a new song, I am the person."

"BELLEVUE, *March* 22, 1886.

"MY DEAR MR. BUSHELL,—How very kind of you to think of me as you do. I almost grudge to use those beautiful grapes, as they might be more useful to some other person. Do accept our earnest, best thanks, and

understand that by your prayers, you do me a greater service than can be rendered by the angels in heaven. I continue carefully to follow out the orders of the doctor. Yesterday afternoon I attended church with my wife."

"BELLEVUE, *March* 26, 1886.

"I send a line or two that you may know that Dr. Dobie and Mr. Bickersteth were here yesterday evening. They, as well as my brother-in-law, Dr. Roxburgh, examined me, and they agree, I am sorry to tell you, that a tumour has been formed, on which Mr. Bickersteth refuses to operate. Dr. Dobie and Dr. Roxburgh recommend us to go to Edinburgh, that Dr. Keith may see me, and we think of going to-day at 1.45. We hope to return soon. Dr. Roxburgh goes with us, which is a great comfort. May I hope for your continued prayers that God's will may be my will. His will is best, whatever we poor mortals may think."

"BRUNSWICK HOUSE, HANOVER SQUARE, LONDON,
March 31, 1886.

"You and others are overwhelming me by your kindness; and all I can say is, I am deeply conscious how unworthy of it I am. Thank you indeed for having written my wife as you have done. Yesterday

morning we left Edinburgh for this, and Dr. Keith, having professional duties at Penrith, accompanied us so far; and as Dr. Roxburgh is with us, you will say I am well attended. Sir James Paget was here this morning, and has given it as his opinion that an operation should be performed. We therefore place the whole subject in Dr. Keith's hands, and have left him to decide regarding everything. No doubt we shall hear the result on Friday. Meantime, we go to Bellevue to-morrow morning, all being well. We hear Mr. Williamson may cross the Channel to-day, and I am sorry the weather is likely to be rough. I am glad he is returning so much benefited by his stay at Cannes. My wife joins me in loving messages to Mrs. Bushell and yourself; and I wish you always to believe me your grateful, affectionate friend,

"A. BALFOUR."

So ends the correspondence between these two friends, of whom it would be difficult to say which admired and loved the other most. Sickness did not interrupt, it rather deepened, this fellowship of heart and mind; and death itself suspended it only for a little season. During this waiting time Mr. Balfour's thoughts were bent as eagerly as ever on the welfare of his beloved city. Shortly before the operation

was decided upon, in taking leave of his old friend, the Rev. Thomas M'Pherson of Liverpool, he said, looking on him with his earnest eyes, "Liverpool is better, and will be better; and if it be God's will that I should go, He will raise up others for the work."

After church, on the Sunday evening before the operation, the present writer called upon him. His mind was full of the old familiar themes; the good of Liverpool, the repression of intemperance, the milk-supply, the condition of the sailors, and the like. Then he spoke of the great goodness of the Saviour to himself. When we had prayed and given thanks together, his anxious wife kneeling beside us, he accompanied us to the door, poured out the expression of gratitude for kindness which "he could never, while he lived, forget," though to us it seemed that all the kindnesses had been on the other side. He took his hat, and, late as it was, would fain have walked with us part of the way, with the old warm-hearted courtesy which was inseparable from his nature. It was with difficulty that he was restrained on the plea of prudence. He spoke the word "farewell," and we saw his face no more.

The notes of engagements, &c., in his pocket diary, during the closing weeks of his life, indicate that his accustomed thoughts kept their ordinary channel, and

that his accustomed employments, though necessarily restricted, were not given up.

In March 1886 we find such entries as the following:—

"*March* 12. Strangers' Rest at 3.30 and 7 P.M.

"*March* 18. Committee of Orphanage; Mersey Mission annual meeting."

The closing memoranda in the beginning of April, as entered in his firm unaltered handwriting, are these:—

"*April* 1. Home to Liverpool.

"*April* 2. Resting quietly.

"*April* 3. Dr. Keith writes he is willing to come to Mount Alyn to perform operation about 12th or 13th.

"*April* 4. Sunday. Had a Bible-reading with my wife—1 Pet. i. 1–12. Thankful for truths. Dr. Dobie came about 5 P.M."

And there the record ceases, with the expression of thankfulness to the last, and thankfulness for truths of unutterable preciousness to the living and the dying man:—"That the trial of your faith, being more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy

unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

"Christianity," continues Dr. Roxburgh, "as exemplified in Alexander Balfour's career, was essentially a practical religion, whose issues did not exist only in futurity. His whole life had borne conspicuous testimony to the fact that the faith of Christ, when accompanied by the Spirit of Christ, instead of impoverishing, greatly enriches the natural resources of a man's being. It was through it that he had been able to become at once, an accomplished man of the world, and the most unworldly of men. As in the case of the heroic General Gordon, who predeceased him, and with whose character his had many affinities, constant communion with Heaven rendered him a better citizen of earth. To him secular activities were not inconsistent with sacred aspirations. An entire submission to the will of God implied no ascetic withdrawal from social occupations and duties. Nay, rather it enforced the doing of these, with the authority of Divine sanction. This striking characteristic now shone out with singular beauty. The fact that he stood so near the brink of death made no appreciable difference, either in his demeanour or his interests. He pursued his accustomed avocations with the same hearty zeal as before; interested himself keenly in

political questions, those especially which concerned the moral well-being of the people; threw himself with his habitual freshness of sympathy into the plans for ameliorating the lot of his fellow-creatures, which were never absent from his mind; and in private converse at home, was as full of wholesome content and happiness of spirit, as if he had not a care. The milk question still greatly occupied his mind, his desire being that an adequate scheme should be launched, although he might be unable to co-operate. Early in the morning his happy laugh could be heard, as he paid his nursery visits to the children, and only by a painful effort, could those who saw him then, grasp the fact that a perilous ordeal lay in his immediate future, and that in a very few days his voice might be hushed for ever.

"A lady who visited him at this time, and only two days before the portentous operation, wrote immediately after seeing him:—'I cannot help saying that on Sunday I felt that there was a grandeur, even a glory, about Mr. Balfour in his utter self-forgetfulness. I really felt that in his presence, I understood the nature of our Saviour as I had never done before.'

"His prayers in family worship, at this time, were very beautiful in their simplicity. He would pray for the children separately by name; for the boys, that

they might be attentive to their lessons, and grow up to be true and Christian men; that the medical men might be guided and make no mistake; and that acquiescence in all God's will might be granted. Then, having unburdened himself, he was just as natural, as bright, and as interested in all practical affairs, and all that related to social improvement, as if he had not a thought or a trouble on his own account. During all the time I was with him, he was neither gloomy nor exalted, but just his natural self. He spoke little about himself. I noticed a wonderful gentleness about him during these last weeks, as if the land that is afar off were in view. His affectionate devotion to his friends, whose prayers, he said, 'were his best cordial,' and still more to those united to him by the dearest ties, was now more tender than ever.

"His character seemed daily ripening into completeness, and even his denunciations of what he considered grievous wrong were free from all asperity and haste, as if he were in sight of the Eternal and the Unchangeable.

"It was decided that the operation should take place in his own house, Mount Alyn. On the evening preceding it, Mr. Balfour was in the drawing-room, and his discussion of the Irish question, then pro-

minently brought to the front by Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule measure, was as animated as if no other subject preoccupied his thoughts. The following morning found him walking with me among the spring flowers of his garden, talking of his plans for the future, should life be spared. He said that he would have to give up journeying to and from Liverpool. 'Under existing circumstances,' he said, 'there is no question at all in my mind as to the course to be pursued. My heart is in Liverpool; my dearest friends are there, people whose friendship I value above everything. My work and interest are there. In Liverpool I wish to live and die.' At family worship that morning, he read the passage which tells of the communion in spirit between the dying thief and the dying Saviour. When he came to the words, 'Lord, remember me, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom,' and the Redeemer's answer, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise," he paused over them, and repeated them, remarking, 'How kind it was in Jesus, when asked by the thief to remember him, to give so much more than he asked: "To-day shalt thou be *with Me*, in Paradise"!' When he spoke these words, there were thoughts in his heart too deep for speech. He then prayed with touching simplicity for each member of his family by

name, and with especial earnestness for his youngest little boy, whose birthday it was. One sentence of his prayer still lingers in the recollection of those present—'We commit ourselves to Thee, body, soul, and spirit, desiring to acquiesce in Thy will, whatever that may be.' With deep fervour, too, he pleaded for the town whose interests lay so near his heart —'Lord, remember that great community.' How profound was his desire for personal holiness was evidenced by a remark made that morning in private converse with his wife—'I wish sin to be eradicated from my being, just as the doctors are going to cut this disease out of my body.'

"He had already provided for every contingency in the disposal of his affairs, and while awaiting the arrival of the surgeons, he wrote several letters of friendship, the last of which was one of kindly counsel to a young clerical friend, enclosing a cheque for him to use in enjoying a holiday change. After giving some final directions to his dear wife, he retired with her to their room, and tenderly, on bended knee, commended her and her children to the care of their Father in heaven. When the surgeons drove up, accompanied by his valued friend and medical adviser, Dr. Dobie of Chester, he met them at the door with his usual hearty greeting, and

in a few minutes had prepared himself for the fateful ordeal. As the anæsthetic was about to be administered, he asked for one minute's delay, 'to get his mind into a right state,' and then said, 'Now I am ready.' He had been strengthening himself with thoughts of his Divine Master, and His prayer, John xii. 27, 28, and as he became anæsthetised, he several times called out in a clear voice, 'Father, glorify Thy name.'

"The terrible task of the surgeons occupied an hour and a half. When it was over, a time of great weakness, but of comparative immunity from suffering, ensued, and for the first two days all went well. No expressions but those of thankfulness and consideration for others escaped his lips. Though extremely feeble, he rewarded every trifling service with a grateful smile, and a courteous word of thanks. He besought his devoted nurse, who would not leave him by night or day, to go out and enjoy the sunshine and air, and lay in his darkened room in perfect tranquillity. High hopes began to be entertained that, as he had been safely brought through a dangerous illness before, he might weather even this violent storm. These hopes were doomed to disappointment. Towards the evening of the third day grave symptoms showed themselves, and deepened in

severity as night came on. It was a night of much distress and weariness, but there was no impatience. His lips often moved in prayer, and it was sometimes possible to distinguish the words, 'For Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.' At last he gradually sank into unconsciousness, and at four o'clock in the peaceful spring morning, as the song-birds began to usher in another day to the toilers of earth, his spirit awoke to the light of a day that has no ending, to the tearless life where he shall be 'for ever with the Lord,' whom he had loved and served so faithfully.

"Those who now gazed for the last time on the form of him, who during life had been as an inspiration to them, cannot forget how placid and how grand he was in death. Like a warrior he lay, taking his rest, no mark of illness or pain upon his brow. To speak of "death" in connection with him seemed impossible. The limbs so active in loving service, the hands so bounteous in generous deeds, seemed only resting, not dead.

> 'O strong soul, by what shore
> Tarriest thou now? For that force
> Surely has not been left vain!
> Somewhere, surely, afar,
> In the sounding labour-house vast
> Of being, is practised that strength,
> Zealous, beneficent, firm!'

To those left behind it was as if a dream, from whose

bands one had to shake oneself free, were closing a great chapter of life, and veiling the beginning of a new epoch, when all should be changed, and that radiant presence should no more be seen to help, to stimulate, to sympathise. After a time they learned to thank God for that sudden transition, for the short and painless interval between the fulness of earthly life and the glories of the Heavenly life, and for the fresh conviction gained, of the reality of that 'continuing City,' to whose very gates they seemed to have followed their beloved one.

"The news that this good man had passed away produced a profound impression wherever his name was known. Signs of public mourning were at once visible in Liverpool, where the daily press gave warmly appreciative expression to the prevailing feeling. The multitudes of letters which now, in increasing volume, poured in from all quarters upon the bereaved wife and family, from individuals of every degree of social influence, spoke but one voice of deep personal loss and sorrow. Some of these were from public men engaged in the work of legislation; others from humble friends, to whom, all unknown even to those in his closest confidence, he had been a benefactor; others again from Christian workers in many spheres."

Let a few sentences from letters of sorrow and sympathy suffice.

The Bishop of Sodor and Man writes:—"My last interview with him was but a few days before his death. He wrote to ask Mr. Clarke Aspinall and myself to lunch quietly with him, to discuss some question of temperance legislative reform—but in truth to say good-bye. To each of us was present the knowledge, that in a few days he might be called to pass within the veil. To the fact no reference, however, was made; and it was only the prolonged clasp of the hand, at bidding farewell, which revealed the mutually conscious truth.

"It is a privilege and a responsibility to have known the inner life of such a man. It is the life of such a man which, as it can be read by all, is one of the strongest evidences of the truth of the Christian religion, and it is well that for many years to come, the proposed statue should testify that Liverpool is not unmindful of the good gift, which God bestowed upon her in the person of Alexander Balfour."

Mr. Clarke Aspinall, who shared with Mr. Balfour some of his delightful summer tours to Sweden and elsewhere, and not a few of his beneficent and self-denying labours, in a letter to us thus refers to "our

most valued friend, the good Alexander Balfour, one of the most remarkable men I ever knew:"—"So lion-hearted, and yet so sweet and gentle; so full of energy, and yet so patient; in a word, so Christ-like in his many-sided Christian benevolences;—his friendship did very much to brighten and strengthen many years of my own life. And now, 'the sweet memory of the past' often gives me comfort and encouragement. May God grant us more men like him in Liverpool; and in His own good time He will."

Mrs. Josephine Butler, with whose difficult and often distressing work Mr. Balfour warmly sympathised, says of him, "He was one of those men who seem to shed a radiance all around them."

The following lines by a mourning fellow-citizen appeared at this time:—

ALEXANDER BALFOUR.

Finish'd his work on earth, his life of love
And Christian sympathy. Ours, ours the grief,
The sorrow, and the void; but his the joy—
The joy unspeakable and full of bliss.
Finish'd the struggle here, the mortal pain.
We wonder and are still, because we see
Darkly, as through the glass of earthly sight.
We miss the heart so full of sympathy,
So touched by tender love for human-kind,
The wealth of Christian charity, the deep
Unchang'd devotion of his life and means

To lift the fallen, dry the widow's tear,
Bring sunshine into many a darkened home,
And hope and joy to many a sinking heart.
His the rare gift to differ far and wide
From some around him; yet by word or deed
Never to wound, never to lose a friend.
He has left footprints on the sands of time
Down to the water's edge, where that dark wave
Bore him away beyond our mortal ken.
"The Lord hath need of him;" and he is gone
Into the presence-chamber of his King.
Who, who will fill his place—stand in the gap
Where he so nobly stood? The Lord hath need
Of many such as he—with fervent zeal
To lift on high the Standard of the Cross,
And consecrate their lives as he has done.

—T. D. B.

Dr. Roxburgh thus describes the sad solemnities of the funeral:—

"The 20th of April, the day when the remains were committed to the earth, witnessed a memorable scene. Multitudes of friends and admirers flocked to Mount Alyn from different quarters of the country, to join in a last tribute to the memory of a 'man greatly beloved.' A special train from Liverpool brought hundreds of leading citizens, as well as deputations and representatives of innumerable institutions and charities which had counted him as their unfailing friend, a hundred of the orphans from the Seamen's Orphanage being among the number. The Young Men's Christian Association had written, asking that they might bear the body of their beloved President

to the churchyard, but that was considered impracticable. A large number of the members, however, followed on foot. The day was bright with sunshine and the twitter of birds. It was on such days as this that the genial host had often delighted to welcome his friends to his ever-hospitable country-house, and as the *cortège* slowly wended its way to the village of Rossett, every shady tree, every peep of the beautiful prospect of hill, and dale, and river, brought vividly to memory the man with whom the whole was so indissolubly associated. The Parish Church of Rossett was thronged with hushed and reverent mourners of every degree and of many creeds. At the churchyard gates the procession was met by the Bishop of Liverpool, the Vicar of Rossett, Rev. T. V. Wickham, and other clergymen; and thence to the church door, the Bishop, with the Rev. R. H. Lundie (Presbyterian) on his right, led the procession, and recited the opening sentences. Within the church the burial service was conducted by the Bishop and the Vicar, the Rev. R. H. Lundie reading the lesson, in happy harmony with what had ever been the desire of the departed, to sink ecclesiastical distinctions, in promoting the fraternal union of Christians for all holy purposes. At the grave the Bishop requested Mr. Lundie to say a few words. After he had

spoken, the service concluded with the singing, by the deeply-moved gathering, which filled the churchyard and the adjacent roads, of Mr. Balfour's favourite hymn :—

'Peace, perfect peace in this dark world of sin?
The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed?
To do the will of Jesus, this is rest.

Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging round?
On Jesus' bosom nought but calm is found.

Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away?
In Jesus' keeping we are safe, and they.

Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown?
Jesus we know, and He is on the throne.

Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and ours?
Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.

It is enough: earth's struggles soon shall cease,
And Jesus call us to Heaven's perfect peace.'

"It was a scene of tears and sighing, but the note of triumph was almost as loud as that of grief. With the mourning was mingled a thankful joy, that God had given such a man to bless and to ennoble the world, and that he had so victoriously faced death, and passed to his reward.

"A few words remain to be said on the manner in which Mr. Balfour disposed of his property. True to a favourite principle of his, he left no bequests to public charities. He had throughout life consistently

opposed posthumous liberality, asserting that, as a general rule, there was neither wisdom nor virtue in hoarding money during life, and then bestowing it on charities, when the donor could not help leaving it behind him, and when he could not interest himself either in its administration or its good fruits. He frequently urged that those who thus saved their possessions, that they might bequeath large sums to benevolent objects, were depriving themselves of the chief happiness possible to men, that of seeing their fellow-creatures benefited, and their burdens lightened, and of sympathising with, as well as pecuniarily aiding, them. He also desired that the members of his family should enjoy this great privilege; and in view of his repeated declaration that he wished to give in his own life-time all that he intended thus to bestow, it was no surprise to his friends, to find that his will contained no other provisions than those of a private nature. He left a legacy far more precious and enduring than gold, in innumerable lives stirred to self-sacrifice, and kindled to warmer love and brighter faith."

Soon after his death, it was resolved that a statue of Mr. Balfour should be erected in a public position, if possible, near the river and the sailors for whom he toiled so earnestly. Great, alas! as must

be the disparity between the active form, the mobile features, the ever-changing expression of the departed, and the most skilful portraiture in marble or in bronze, the citizens as they pass, will be reminded of the noble character and the devoted life of one, than whom none ever loved their city more.



APPENDIX.

LIFE:

A SERMON PREACHED, AFTER THE DEATH OF

ALEXANDER BALFOUR, BY THE

REV. R. H. LUNDIE, M.A.

What then? Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Were these prayers unheard? Hearken to our text and judge whether a broader, fuller answer has not been vouchsafed to these prayers than we desired when we uttered them: "He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever."

These words, if applicable in a sense to David, only reach their fulfilment in the Son of David. We have His experience depicted here; and in Him the experience of His children. "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." To this conflict the Apostle refers when he says, in Hebrews v. 7: "In the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, He was heard in that He feared." He was heard when He asked life, and yet He died. Through death He reached the "endless life," "even length of days for ever and ever."

Let us consider how, in the experience of His servant, the life we asked was given. Life was peculiarly characteristic of our friend. Some men vegetate; he lived. Intense, eager, sanguine, enthusiastic, his copious life flowed over into the beings of those he met. His presence often proved as a tonic or restorative to them.

But in sickness, and with the shadow darkening over him of what he well knew to be a terrible and perilous ordeal, did this life continue? I shall never forget the impression made upon my mind by his bearing an hour or two after the critical visit and consultation of four surgeons. The spokesman among them had frankly stated the true and grave nature of the case. I mentioned at his grave, but will repeat it now, that his reply was this, "Well, Doctor, that is an announcement that must come to each of us sooner or later,

the great thing is, that it should find us resting on the Rock of our salvation." When left alone with the partner of his joys and sorrows, his first word was this, "Then Mr. Samuel Smith must be communicated with at once about the Y. M. C. A.; they may need another trustee." All this had taken place in the evening. At ten o'clock that night I went with a heavy heart to his bedside, and started to see his countenance not peaceful only, almost radiant. Even then his life knew no abatement. "We asked life, and God gave it him." He said to me, "You know that a year ago I passed under a time of darkness. But God has chased that all away: and this (he added), *this* is only physical. If you want to know my experience, you will find it in the 116th Psalm, verse by verse, step by step: 'I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice and my supplications.'" And he repeated from memory the verses till he came to this, which he uttered with peculiar tenderness and delight, "I was brought low, and He helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." "He helped me," he repeated, "and now it is all peace."

I came away marvelling at his quiet fortitude and joy, yet thinking perhaps that the excitement of that evening had thrown him into an abnormal condition of mind which would pass away. It never passed away as long as he lived. He was full of keen interest in the themes that occupied his mind. About himself he spoke little, and that always with tranquil, happy trustfulness. But when he touched upon the young men of Liverpool, or the Sheltering Home for our city arabs, or the Bible in the elementary schools of the city, or his desire to have the new Gordon Institution for Boys based on a thoroughly Christian foundation, or a subject which occupied him much in his later weeks, the provision

of a far ampler supply of milk for the working-classes, he glowed with all his old enthusiasm. So was it if the conversation turned on matters of public policy or the welfare of India, from which his friend, Mr. S. Smith, returned during his illness, and about which they talked together. I may mention, as singularly characteristic of the man, that when Mr. and Mrs. Smith left him on one of these occasions, he remarked, "I thought they would have come home in high spirits; did you not think them very much subdued to-day?" The weight that pressed upon their spirits when they saw their friend, did not seem to burden his own mind. A near relative, whose presence was an unspeakable solace to the family in the closing period of Mr. Balfour's life, writes to me thus: "I was struck with his happiness during these last weeks. Every morning his jovial, cheery voice could be heard, as he played with the children; and he was in all points so completely natural, so entirely himself, that one could not fail to see that the near prospect of death made no appreciable change in his thought or conduct. He had lived so long in the unseen, that its near approach involved no sudden transition." When his first warning came, no abrupt change was needed; no laying down of accustomed occupations or substitution of others, more fitting for the borders of eternity. He just pursued the work he was doing, and the thoughts he was thinking: he went on as he had done; he delighted, as was his wont, with singular relish in the society of his friends, he discussed his favourite plans—sometimes with a far-off look in his eye—he asked God's blessing on all. Living as he had lived, the call found him watching. Here too we can say, "He asked life, and Thou gavest it him."

The glory of God was the prevailing thought in his mind when the operation was about to be performed. The morn-

ing of the operation found him walking among the spring flowers of his garden, with a loved relative, and then writing letters to his friends. When all was prepared, in few and simple words, he bade his wife farewell. A surgeon—it was the same relative with whom he had just been walking in the garden—was about to administer an anæsthetic. "Wait a moment," he said, "till my mind is in a right state." After a solemn silence of a minute or two, "Now I am ready," he said. And after he had begun to inhale the anæsthetic, in a loud voice he exclaimed, "Father, glorify Thy Name," and again, and once again, repeated the same prayer. After the operation, feeble as he was, his words were sometimes words of prayer to his Father in heaven, sometimes words of love to his friends on earth. On any service rendered he would say, "Thank you, thank you; how kind you all are!" With his dying voice he begged his faithful nurse, who would not leave him day or night, to go out to get the fresh air. His last night was one of great weariness and distress. "This body of humiliation!" he was once heard to whisper; and often he was seen to be in prayer, though no more was distinctly heard than "for Jesus Christ's sake," repeated many times. He was not taken by surprise: in love to God and man he fell asleep. He was not, for God took him.

The influence of a good life does not pass away with the mortal breath. Alexander Balfour lives to-day in the many lives over which he exerted his magnetic influence; in many Christians who were quickened, encouraged, impelled by his holy enthusiasm; in not a few, I believe, of all ranks who are now doing good work for God and man in various departments, who were first started in the course of Christian philanthropy through him; in young men scattered over the land and the world, of whom we hear from time to time, who trace their serious impressions to the Y. M. C. A.

of Liverpool, and sometimes directly to its President. And may it not be that God, who gave him the especial task of kindling other souls, may have seen fit to order his removal as He did—direct from the conflict to the crown, without pause, without decline, without sensible change, till the great change came—to intensify the influence of that potent life? May not the electric touch of love, of sympathy, of sorrow, which passed from this man, greatly beloved, to a wide circle of friends, have been just what was needed to "perfect that which concerneth Him," and to crown that fruitful life? "We asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him."

Our friend is gone, but he lives in the institutions he founded or sustained, he lives in good men who have risen up to call him blessed, and who will spread their life in wider and ever wider circles in our day, and long after we too shall have passed away. Good deeds and generous purposes do not die.

We prayed for life and our brother died. But when we prayed, did we sufficiently realise that there are two sides to this matter of living? To "abide in the flesh seemed more needful for us;" did we also remember that "to depart and be with Christ was far better" for him? The good Lord saw all sides, while we looked most at one. We must not forget that over against our prayer for life stands recorded our Redeemer's prayer, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory." The hour comes when that will of Jesus must prevail; and the remembrance of this should ever lead us to lay beneath all such prayer for life a basis of submission: "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Our friend was taught this lesson by the Spirit of the Lord. As the weeks of waiting rolled away, he

said to his wife, "We need not any longer ask for acquiescence in God's will, whatever that may be, for we have got that; let us ask for the glory of God." In such falling in with the will of the Living God, is there not more than the life we asked for him? I had the privilege of spending with him the late evening hours of his last Sunday upon earth. With his usual courtesy and elasticity, he came with me to the door when I was leaving. I expressed my delight at seeing him so bright and cheerful, adding, "That is greatly in your favour." I dare say something of surprise was in my tone, for he said, "Well, it is just this way, I have put it all into the Lord's hands, and I take no burden of the morrow; He will take care of that; I just go on from step to step, one at a time." His manner seemed to mean, "No credit to me; the Lord has seen to all that."

Once more, a ripe soul has gone to the inheritance of the saints in light, for which, through God's goodness, it was made meet. Of that heavenly life we shall not speak. He knows far more of it, in all its freedom from sin, and sorrow, and suffering, in all the fulness of blessing which the presence of the King commands, than we shall know till—if we take his Saviour to be our Saviour—we are called to join him. "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of joy with Thy countenance." "In the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death." "We asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him, *even length of days for ever and ever.*"

Our beloved friend's own view on the Christian limitations of prayer is so beautifully expressed in the following simple incident, that I will venture to narrate it:—A life-long friend wrote to him that his boy of six had been listening to his evening lesson read to him by his teacher. It contained

the words addressed to Solomon, "Ask what I shall give thee." The nature of prayer was explained to the child, who quietly whispered, "I know what I am going to pray for to-night." To the question, "What will you ask for?" he answered, "That Mr. Balfour may get better, and I'm going to ask it every day till he is well." A letter from Mr. Balfour's pen, which bears date the 10th of April, contains these words: "Dear little Bay's action is a lesson for us all. I am truly grateful to him, and shall ask that the Lord Himself may reward and bless the honest, kindly heart that has been thinking of me in my trouble. I can never be grateful enough to friends for their prayers, which God *must* answer; not, perhaps, in the way we desire, but in the way He knows to be best for us. So my own prayer would be that His will may be my will. Madame Guion wrote:—

> 'Upon God's will I lay me down
> As child upon its mother's breast;
> No silken couch, nor softest bed,
> Could ever give me such deep rest.'

And her position I desire may be mine." The lines just quoted he had in his later weeks fastened upon his desk, where his eye continually rested upon them. Need I add that the child was startled and surprised when he heard that the good man for whose recovery he prayed was dead! Are we not all children in such matters? The boy did not understand, and we find it hard to understand that still it is true, "We asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him."

I have dwelt long on the closing weeks of our friend's life. The truth is, that the impression made on my mind, and on the minds of those nearest him in that crisis, is profound and indelible. It was almost awe-inspiring to find him, on the very brink of the unseen world, living his

accustomed life, seizing every opportunity to do good; joyful among his friends, playful with the children, unruffled and undisturbed. The breath of the next world was already breathing on his brow; and something more than the love, and gentleness, and joy of this world were in his heart. There was a majestic peace and self-possession in the man. I was reminded of what I was told by one who had known him from boyhood; he said, "He always looked on him, even when a lad, as formed of the stuff of which martyrs are made: he would not have hesitated two minutes to go to the stake, had duty required it."

Of his life I need say little to you among whom he lived. I cannot here stay even to mention all the Christian and philanthropic institutions with which his name is identified, and some of which owe their existence to his simple faith, his burning enthusiasm, and his indomitable perseverance. Not once nor twice did he appear to his friends and fellow-workers a Utopian in the large plans he sketched, and the heavy burdens he took, and encouraged them to take. His projects seemed the visions of an excited brain; yet he lived to realise them in full development and splendid usefulness. "Impracticable," his own best friends have sometimes whispered in such cases. Yes, impracticable to men of common mould, but not to faith and zeal like his. "All things are possible to him that believeth."

Seamen were early the objects of his care. It was not in his nature to climb by their help to fortune, and to leave themselves unconsidered. His conviction was, that the tie between sailors and their employers ought to be much stronger and more permanent than it is. This view—not he only, but in thorough union with him—his firm endeavoured to carry out in practice. The Apprentices' Home in Duke Street was one valuable expression of this

conviction, for which many have had reason to give thanks to God. Then, if, in his perilous calling, the sailor, as he held on to his sinking ship, thought with agony of the children who were to be written fatherless, was nothing adequate to be attempted to assuage that grief, and provide a home for the desolate? Such thoughts, seething in his heart, and the hearts of a few like-minded men, translated themselves into the noble institution known as the Seamen's Orphanage. The Mersey Mission and the Seamen's Friend Society formed additional outlets for generous effort in the sailor's highest interest.

The young men of Liverpool occupied a sacred place in his heart. He thought of them, he planned for them, he worked for them, he prayed for them continually. Get the young men of Liverpool, he would say, imbued with Christian principle, and adequately taught and trained, and the Liverpool of the future will be a new Liverpool. None but those nearest him can know how he bore the young men on his heart without ceasing. That the Y. M. C. A.—deep-rooted in Mount Pleasant, and already beginning to spread forth its branches to other parts—is what it is, is largely due to its President. He, with his friend, Mr. S. Smith, rejoiced in the acquisition of the Gymnasium, as a kind of annex to the Y. M. C. A. Thus the necessities of the physical frame were not overlooked.

Were we to traverse the whole circle of Liverpool's best charities, we should find his footsteps everywhere. Where was help needed? Where could the substance which God had given him be best employed for the good of his fellow-men? These were questions continually in his mind. No one can tell the multifarious channels in which his beneficence flowed: homes of rest near his own country mansion, for toil-worn city missionaries, and other Christian

workers; quiet encouragement to Christian ministers of various denominations who, in seeking to do good work in the city, became faint by the way; timely counsel for young men needing a start in life; bales of blankets in the cold winter for the poor and the needy. And what shall I more say? There are hundreds in our great city who could add indefinitely to a catalogue like this, and who can say to-day, "Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees." The record of his often-hidden deeds is on high.

One branch of his work must not be left untouched—temperance. He held with Cobden, that "the temperance movement lies at the root of all social and political reform." He saw in drunkenness the most powerful among the causes that produce the poverty, degradation, and crime which prevail around us.

His spirit was moved with compassion for those perishing from strong drink, and he sought to diminish the abounding temptations. He pitied the overburdened public-house managers, barmen, and barmaids, whose hours are more protracted, and whose task is more deadly, than those of any other trade in England; and he sought their relief. But, besides all this, he perceived, as he believed, law perverted and wrong done in ways which this is not the place to specify, in the interest of a powerful trade, or of unscrupulous traffickers outside said trade, to the ruin of thousands. Could such a man see such things and hold his peace? He buckled on his armour, and in the town and its Council set himself to the task of exposing, and, if possible, removing these evils. No venerable abuses would he spare. No combination of opponents and no amount of contumely could silence his voice. A tremendous indig-

nation burnt like fire within his breast. I do not allege that, with a spirit goaded by a sense of intolerable wrong done to thousands of his fellow-citizens, his proposals were always wise, or his words always measured; but I dare affirm that, as the result of the rough task assigned to him, and discharged with a courage that knew not how to flinch, our city has been in part delivered from abuses which skulked unseen, till his brave hand tore down the veil. Besides this, none can doubt that the tone which marks the conduct of our public affairs is sensibly elevated. To this result our departed friend made no slender contribution.

In his position as President of the Popular Control and Sunday-closing Association, he laboured with ceaseless energy for two objects, viz., the better administration of existing License-law, and reform in Imperial License legislation. In reference to the latter, he worked largely on the lines of the Church of England Temperance Society, so ably presided over by his warm friend, Canon Ellison.

As a part of the great temperance reform, the Cocoa-Room movement and the "separated milk" movement engaged his warmest sympathies. The recent conversion, in the blighted corner near the Sailors' Home, of a huge gin-palace into the Institute of the Mersey Mission, combined with a flourishing Cocoa-Room, made him radiant with joy. No accession to his personal possessions could have gladdened him as did the change of hands—from evil to good—of this fortress, which, better than any other, commands the haunts of our seamen.

In work like this it has been my privilege to be long and closely associated with him, and to know the grandeur and purity of his aims.

We have spoken of his Christian work among ourselves. But its sphere was much wider. Valparaiso can testify to

his long-continued and enlightened efforts. The opening fields of the Dark Continent occupied his heart: yea, and to have all the world won for Christ was his intense desire. But Liverpool, "that great community," for which he so pathetically pleaded daily till the day when he lay down to die—Liverpool was graven on his heart, like Jerusalem on the heart of the exiled Jews. To succour, to elevate, to bless Liverpool, was the consuming passion of his life.

As a man of business, how did this Christian philanthropist stand? The commercial world around us with one voice bears testimony to his high and unblemished reputation. I am permitted to quote a few sentences from a letter written by his partner, Mr. Stephen Williamson, to Mrs. Balfour on the 17th April:—"Liverpool and the world little know what they have lost. Only those who knew him, as an inner circle did, can form a right conception of his nobility of character, his purity and unselfishness, his Christian faith and heroism. During thirty-five years' association with him, I never heard him utter a word or saw him do an act that he might not, as it seems to me, have said and done in the presence of Infinite Holiness." A better testimony words could not frame.

Your hearts, brethren, as we have been contemplating this noble character, have been asking, From what source did it take its rise? Have we any clear means of knowing? Happily we have access to materials that will not mislead us. Let himself unveil the spring of his own life and motive. On the 15th of August 1880, he thus wrote to our venerable father, the Rev. James Towers of Birkenhead, to whose congregation he used, as a young man, to belong: "It was under your ministry that I first was led to that entire surrender of my heart to the Lord, which marked an era in my existence, unending in its gracious results. We can

only faintly, while we live here, realise what is implied in the text, 'A child of God by faith in Jesus Christ.'" Mr. Towers tells me that till he received this letter, he did not fully understand what Mr. Balfour meant when he used to say to him that "coming to Birkenhead had been worth more to him than thousands of gold and silver." There is reason to think that what Mr. Balfour here refers to, was not his first reception of the truth as it is in Jesus, but a season of new consecration and great enlargement of soul.

Another unquestionable guide in this matter lies before me. It contains the deliberate and carefully expressed declaration of his faith. I quote from his will. "In conclusion, I wish to testify to the goodness and mercy shown to me, who am less than the least of all saints, by Almighty God, and I gratefully recognise His wonderful kindness and indulgence during my whole life. I have no merits of my own, and I put my hope and assured confidence, in this life and for another, solely in the merits of my Redeemer. I commend my wife and children to the care and blessing of our Heavenly Father, in whose love and fear, and in obedience to whose blessed will, I desire that they may live; and I seek to leave this world in charity with all men."

His pronounced personality was all his own. *That* we could not, and should not try, to imitate. But the fountain from which he drew his deep gratitude, pure motive, elevated purpose, is not exhausted. Let us too drink of it, and our lives also shall grow noble. It was good to weep around his grave, as many of us did last Tuesday, in that wonderful gathering of devout men, of every name and rank, who carried him to his burial; it will be better to cluster round his Lord, and, like him, to sit at the feet of Jesus. If we desire to follow him we must begin where he began, by

"the entire surrender of our hearts to the Lord." We "must be born again."

Time will not permit me to enlarge upon his character. In the view we have taken of his life and death we have seen everywhere proofs of his faith, his unselfishness, his purity. On two or three characteristics suffer a brief word.

His humility was such that he tended to disclaim all credit for his noble acts, and often spoke as if the recipient were conferring a favour upon him in accepting his kindness. He reminds me of the Centurion who asked the Lord for the healing of his servant. The elders pressed the petition, saying that "he was worthy for whom He should do this; for he loveth our nation, and hath built us a synagogue." The Centurion would not endorse their testimony, but said, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof." Just like our friend, who sensitively shrank from praise, and passed it on to others, whatever he had built or done. "He is worthy," said his colleagues in effort, and the receivers of his benefits; "I am not worthy," was the constant answer of his humble bearing. His whole life seemed to carry out the Apostle's precept, "Be kindly affectioned one to another, in honour preferring one another."

His catholicity was a marked feature. No man more conscientiously adhered to the truth he held, and yet none was more ready to appreciate all that was good in those who differed from him in minor things. It does not need to be said that his princely benefactions, though beginning in his own Church, welled over to the refreshment of uncounted good causes in other branches of the Church of Christ, and in the community at large.

This leads me to mention that strange magnetic sympathy

in him which fastened, as by instinct, on that which was best in other men. He credited them with all they had and more. Such men he drew into beneficent work, who are now doing excellent service—men some of whom seemed to others unlikely instruments, and who, but for him, might never have learnt to put life to such good account. He made them first wonderingly admit to themselves that their lives might be made useful; and then he gradually inflamed them with the fires of his irrepressible enthusiasm and hope. Work must be done for God and man, and men must be found to do it. He found them sometimes where no one else could find them. He touched the latent good that was in them, and at his sympathetic touch that good grew greater. They found that the paths of beneficence were pleasant paths, and they followed where he led. This power of influencing others was, perhaps, the most marked of all his characteristics.

There was a certain manifoldness about his character. Most enthusiastic men get absorbed in one main enterprise. He carried on many at a time. He would lay hold of one man, and pour out his soul on temperance as if he could think of nothing else; he met another, and education was his theme; another, and with a zeal as impetuous he would launch forth on what must be done for the waifs of our streets. He held them all in hand at once, and apparently, with equal firmness.

His courage rose to fearlessness. It was the boldness of a man who knew that in his cause he had Heaven behind him. Our conflicts in this great community are not over yet; and the day may come ere long when the thought of him shall call to mind the inscription graven by the Carthaginians on the tomb of Hannibal, "We greatly desired him in the day of battle."

I well remember a prayer of his in the vast Victoria Hall, when Moody and Sankey were here—in no small measure through his influence. He prayed that the Gospel might so illuminate our town that the "dark spot on the Mersey" might be changed into the bright spot on the Mersey; and that, as it had been conspicuous for drunkenness and vice, it might become an example among cities, of righteousness and godliness. For this end he lived. It seemed as if a charge from Heaven had been given him over the highest interests of our city. As he stood, with nervous energy, holding me fast with his penetrating eye, and pouring out his projects for the rescue of the perishing and the blessing of all, he has often reminded me of the prophet of the wilderness, or of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, with the "burden of the Lord" upon his soul.

A rare man is taken from us. Long and deeply will Alexander Balfour be missed by our city, which he loved so well. On whom shall his mantle fall?

Of the loss to his family of such a husband and father I need not speak. Of the loss to myself of one who was more than a friend I will say little. I felt some compensation for his residence of late years so far from us, in the circumstance that frequently after meetings in town he would spend the night under our roof. These brief bright visits were times of impulse and of gladness. His joy over improvements already attained in the condition of his city, and his confident hope that these improvements would make rapid advance, furnished strong impetus hopefully to persevere in all Christian effort. And his too generous appreciation of what his friends endeavoured to accomplish, if it was felt to spring more from the love of his heart than the quality of the work done, yet served to lighten labour and to brace for further service.

And for our congregation, in whose origin he took a large share, and to which he clung with singular attachment even when he resided twenty miles away from us, what shall I say? A great gap is left among us. Brethren, let us dress our ranks;—closer together now, nearer and more helpful to one another, thankful for this, that there remaineth One who will never leave us nor forsake us. Let every life be loftier, let every heart be kinder, let every hand be more diligent, because the good Lord lent us such a man, and spared him to us for the space of twenty years.

For himself we will not weep. Can he not say to-day with still deeper meaning than when on earth, "Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling"? Shall we mourn because, when we asked life for him, God gave him length of days for ever and ever?

"He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die."—JOHN xi. 25, 26.

WE ask the Lord, on bended knee,
One guerdon to bestow—
To give us back a flickering life,
If it should please Him so.

The trembling wife, the tender child,
Together seek the throne;
The widow whom his hand had helped
Pours the same plea, alone.

The wanderer sheltered by his love,
The orphan child, his care,
The grateful sailor cries to God
That precious life to spare.

In groups, with accent hushed and low,
They meet, and moistened eye,—
The young, the old, he loved to shield;
"Give, Lord, his life," they cry.

Won by the heavenly voice that said,
"But ask and I will give;
But seek and ye shall find," they plead,
"We ask that he may live."

The day of trial comes: "He lives;"
The next, "He lives, he sleeps;"
The next, "All well: he sweetly sleeps;"
Next dawn his widow weeps.

And many widows weep with her,
And many fatherless,
And eyes, unused to dim, run o'er
With tears of bitterness.

The hardy tar, the hoary sire,
The boy hushed in his play;—
All, all have lost a faithful friend:
A city weeps to-day.

Our hearts, who prayed for life, are struck
With sorrow to the core;
Yet God *has* heard and given him life,
Even life for evermore.

He toiled for all, his blessed quest
To sweeten every lot;
Of others ever mindful, he
Himself alone forgot.

We'll miss his fearless hand in fight
With evil and with wrong;
And in our aim to help the weak
We'll miss him oft and long.

At noon his lamp from earth to heaven
Was taken, there to shine.

He hath not ceased to live, to work,
With eager soul and bright,
But now, before the throne of God,
He serves Him day and night.

We will not mourn that he is glad,
Nor weep that life is given,
Nor sorrow that his gentle heart
Finds gentle rest in heaven.

THE END.





